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v.1

THE Works of this very pious and learned Author are so well known, and have deservedly obtained such a reputation in the Church of God, that there needs no more to recommend a Book, than to say, it was wrote by Mr. James Durham. There are none of his Writings, but must have a testimony in the hearts and consciences of all serious and experienced Christians, to their eminent usefulness and service. Some of these lead us into the mind of the Holy Ghost in the prophetical book of the Revelations, and that mystical Song of Solomon, of both which, its well known, the Author has given us an elaborate exposition. Another of these unfolds to us the great and glorious mystery of our redemption by the death and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. This the Author does in these Sermons of his, upon the whole 53*d*. of Isaiah; a Work, which (if it may be allowed to make a comparison) equals, at least, if it does not exceed his other Writings. This valuable Piece was grown very scarce, and much out of print. There were frequent calls for it, which could hardly be answered at all, or not without much difficulty; which being observed by some serious and well disposed persons, they judged the reprinting of these Sermons might be of service to the Church of Christ; and having communicated their thoughts to some others, they readily concurred with them therein, not doubting, but whoever should promote this good Work, would think themselves obliged to those that first set the design on foot; since upon their perusal of these Sermons, they will not fail to meet with those things that will as much answer their expectation, as they exceed any commendation that can be given them by others.

Having said thus much, we conclude, praying that the blessing of him who gave this seed to the sower, may make it singularly useful to their souls, who shall seriously peruse it.

Jerem. Smith,	Isaac Watts,	Tho. Bradbury,
John Nesbit,	Joseph Hill,	James Wood,
Matth. Clarke,	John Cumming,	Tho. Hall,
W. Tong,	John Asty,	Jenkin Lewis,
B. Robinson	Daniel Wilcox,	John Mitchel,
Tho. Reynolds,	Jabez Earle,	Edward Wallin,
Tho. Ridgley,	Patr. Russel,	Tho. Harrison,
John Foxon,	James Galloway	

W. Ham

CHRIST CRUCIFIED:

OR, THE

MARROW of the GOSPEL,

Evidently ſet forth in

LXXII SERMONS

ON

The whole 53*d* CHAPTER of ISAIAH,

WHEREIN

The Text is clearly and judicially opened, and a great many moſt appoſite, truly ſpiritual, and very edifying Points of Doctrine, in a delectable Variety, drawn from it, with choice and excellent practical Improvements thereof.

WHEREIN ALSO

Several Adverſaries of the Truth, as Socinians, Arminians, Arians, and Antinomians, are ſolidly and fully refuted.

BESIDES,

Many Errors in Practice incident to Profeſſors, otherwiſe Sound and Orthodox in their Opinions, are diſcovered; and many grave, deep, and very important Caſes of Conſcience, ſatisfyingly diſcuſſed.

By that able Miniſter of the New Teſtament,
The late Rev. Mr. *JAMES DURHAM.*
One of the Miniſters in Glaſgow, and Profeſſor of Divinity in the Univerſity there.

GLASGOW:
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M DCC XCII.

Unto the afflicted and ſerious

CHRISTIANS,

And more particularly to the

Right Honourable and truly Noble Lord,

WILLIAM, Earl of CRAWFORD.

IT is one of the greateſt practical debates and conteſts betwixt God and his own people, who are privileged with a ſpecial intereſt in him, and which they are naturally inclined longeſt to keep up, and are moſt unwilling to let fall, *viz.* Whether he guide and govern them, and mark out their lot to them, while they ſojourn here in the world, as he in his own wiſdom ſhall think fit; having (as it were) a blank ſubmiſſion put by them into his hand, to be filled up with what kind and quality, with what meaſure and quantity, and with what continuance and duration of troubles, trials, and afflictions, himſelf pleaſeth? Or, whether he ſhould, as to ſome things at leaſt, conſult their will and pleaſure, and as it were take their advice, and allow them a liberty to preſcribe to him, how he ſhould guide and diſpoſe of them? And indeed to be here denied to their own will, and abſolutely ſubmit to the will of God, is one of the higheſt and moſt difficult practicable points of ſelf-denial. (To which notwithſtanding all the diſciples and followers of Chriſt are expreſly called; and wherein he hath

hath great delight and complacency, as favouring ſtrong of intire truſt and confidence in him.) Yet if we conſider theſe few things, it will be found, that there is all the reaſon in the world, why they ſhould come, and ſweetly ſubmit themſelves to his will in all things, how croſs ſoever to their own inclination, without any the leaſt ſinful reluctancy, or contradiction; which is our privilege, and the reſtoration of our degenerated nature, to its divine and primitive integrity.

Firſt, If it be conſidered, That he hath a moſt ſovereign, abſolute, and uncontrollable dominion over you, as the potter hath over the clay, for *ye are the clay, and he is the potter:* Nay, he hath more abſolute dominion over you, than the potter hath over his clay; for the potter maketh not the clay, both the clay and the potter being made by him. But *he hath made you, and not you yourſelves. Ye are all the work of his hands*, Pſal. c. 3. Iſa. lxiv. 8. He hath made you living creatures, rational creatures, and new creatures; *If any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17. which is the very flower of the creation: And, *ye are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*, Eph. ii. 10. If therefore it be unſuitable, and incongruous, for the clay *to ſay, to him that faſhioned it, What makeſt thou?* Or, for *a man's work to ſay to him, that he hath no hands*, Iſa. xlv. 9. Its ſure much more for you to ſay, to your great potter and faſhioner, What makeſt thou of us? Why dealeſt thou ſo and ſo with us? *Woe to him that ſtriveth with his Maker; let the potſherds ſtrive with the potſherds of the earth. Hath not the potter power over the clay? And are you not in the hand of the Lord, as the clay is in the hand of the potter?* Rom. ix. 21. Jer. xviii. 6. He might have made you *veſſels to diſhonour, veſſels of wrath, fitted for deſtruction;* without being juſtly chargeable with any injury done to you. And when he hath in the ſovereignty of his moſt wonderful

derful free grace, made you *veſſels to honour*, and *veſſels of mercy, which he hath afore prepared unto glory.* Will ye dare to quarrel with him, for his diſpoſing, in his own way, of your external condition in this world, and of thoſe moveables, and acceſſories, that are wholly extrinſic, and not at all eſſential to your ſalvation, and true happineſs? (For, let all the pleaſures, riches, and honours of the world, even all the delights of the ſons of men in their very extract, ſpirits, and quinteſſence, be as it were diſtilled in a lembic, till they be made to evaporate the pureſt perfumes of their utmoſt perfections, and heaped on the Chriſtian; as they make him no better Chriſtian, nor make any addition at all to his true happineſs: So when he is deplumed and ſtripped naked of them all; every bird as it were of theſe earthly comforts taking back again from him its own feather; he is made never a whit the worſe Chriſtian, nor his happineſs in the leaſt impared.) It were certainly much more becoming you to ſay, It is the Lord, who can do us no wrong, and who hath, undeſervedly, done us much good; let him do to us what ſeemeth good in his ſight.

Secondly, If it be conſidered, That he is of infinite wiſdom, and knows much better what is good for you, than you do for yourſelves, who often miſtake what is good for you, through your corruption, ignorance, partiality, or prejudice; but he, by the moſt abſolute perfection of his bleſſed nature, is infinitely removed from all poſſibility of miſtaken what is good in itſelf, or good for you; and if you will adventure your eſtate and livelihood in the world, on able and faithful lawyers, when ye yourſelves are much unacquainted with, and ignorant of law, and are diſpoſed to think, that the ſuit that is commenced againſt you will ruin you, while they think otherwiſe. And if you will commit your health and life, to ſkilful phyſicians or ſurgeons, and receive from the one many

ny unpleasant and loathsome potions, and pills, and suffer from the other such painful incisions and injections; such searchings, lancings, and pancings; such scarifications, cauterizings, and amputations: From all which ye have so great an aversation, if not abhorrency. Will ye not much rather and much more confidently commit the conduct and care of yourselves, and of all that concerns you, to him *of whose understanding there is no search*, as to what is good for his own people, and whose faithfulness in his dealing with them, *reacheth to the very clouds, and never faileth?* Psal. xxxvi. 5. Psal. lxxxix. 33. The skilfullest of these may mistake, none of them being infallible, and the most faithful of them may possibly at sometimes, and in some things, be found unfaithfully neglective, none of them being perfect: But it is simply impossible for him, either to mistake, or to be unfaithful; for otherwise he should deny himself, and so cease to be God, whereof once to admit the thought, is the highest blasphemy. Let therefore your confident trusting of men, in their respective professions and callings, make you blush at, and be ashamed of your distrusting of God, and of your quarrellings with him, even when ye know not, for the time, what he is doing with you, and when what is done would have been none of your own choice, but doth very much thwart and cross your natural inclinations. Is it not enough that he is infinitely wise in himself, and for you? may you not therefore safely trust in him, and with unsollicitous confidence, commit the conduct of yourselves, and all your concerns to him? As knowing that he cannot himself be misled, nor misgovern you: May you not in faith without distrustful and perplexing fear follow him? As faithful *Abraham followed him, not knowing whither he went*, Heb. xi. 18. And cast all your care on him, *who careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. 7. and hath made it your great care, *to be careful for nothing*, Phil. iv. 6. and thus even sing care away.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, If it be considered, That ye have in your own experience (as the rest of the people of God have in theirs) found, that in all past dealings with you, even those that for the time were most afflicting; his will and your true welfare, have been unseparably joined together, and that but very seldom and rarely, your own will and welfare have met together. So that ye have been constrained, upon calm reflection, to bless him that you had not your will in such and such things; however, for the time ye were displeased with the want of it, and have been made to think, that if ever ye had any good days, or hours, along your pilgrimage, your cross and afflicted ones, wherein God took most of his will, and gave you least of your own, have been your best days and hours. Dare you say, upon serious and just reflections, that it hath been otherways? Or that ye have not reason, as to all past cross-providences, even the most apparently crushing of them, since the day that ye were first brought under the bond of his covenant to this day, to set up, as it were, your stone, and to call it *Ebenezer the stone of help*, saying, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us?* 1 Sam. vii. 12. May you not, and should you not, then humbly and confidently trust him, that ye shall, through grace, have reason as to present and future ones, how sad and surprizing soever they are, or may be circumstantiated, to say, Jehovah-jireh, *The Lord will see, or provide*, Gen. xxii. 14. O! but it will be a sweet, pleasant, spiritual, wholsome, and refreshful air, that breathes in that walk, betwixt Ebenezer, and Jehovah-jireh; wherein a few turns taken, by the most afflicted Christians, in their serious, composed, spiritual, and lively contemplation, would, through God's blessing very much contribute quickly to reconcile them to all their respective crosses, how cross soever, and to the keeping them in better, and more constant spiritual health.

Fourthly, If it be considered, That by your pettish,

fretful, male-contented and unſubmiſſive contendings, ſtrivings and ſtrugglings with him, ye will not help yourſelves, ye may well make your own burden the more uneaſy, and your chain the heavier; *Should it be according to your mind?* Job xxxiv. 33. *ſhall the earth be forſaken for you? or ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?* Job xviii. 4. *will ye diſannul his judgment? will ye condemn him, that ye may be righteous,* Job xl. 8. *will ye ſtrive againſt him, who giveth not account of any of his matters?* Job xxxiii. 13. Will ye tax his wiſdom, as if he did not underſtand what is convenient for you? *will ye teach God knowledge?* Job xxi. 22. Is it fit that he ſhould come down to your will, rather than you ſhould come up to his? Shall God change and break all his wiſely laid meaſures and methods of governing his people, and take new ones to gratify your peeviſh humours? He will not be diverted from his purpoſe, *when he is in one way, who can turn him? what his ſoul deſireth that he doth, for he performeth the thing that is appointed for you,* Job xxiii. 13, 14. He is more juſt to himſelf, (to ſpeak ſo) and more merciful to you, than to degrade as it were his infinite wiſdom ſo far as to ſuffer himſelf to be ſwayed againſt the dictates of it, by ſuch ſhort-ſighted and forward tutors as you; the great phyſician of ſouls is more compaſſionate and wiſe than to permit his diſtempered, and ſometimes even in a manner diſtracted patients, to preſcribe their own courſe of phyſick; but he will needs do, what he thought fit and reſolved to do, *whether ye chooſe, or whether ye refuſe,* Job xxxiv. 33. only he would (to ſay ſo) have your conſent unto, and your approbation of what he doth for the greater peace and tranquility of your own minds; *Surely therefore it is meet,* meekly and ſubmiſſively *to be ſaid to God,* whenever and however he chaſtiſeth, *I have born chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more, that which I know not, teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do ſo no more,* Job

xxxiv.

xxxiv. 31, 32. It is the fureſt and ſhorteſt way to have our will formed ſo as may be for our welfare, to allow him to take his own will and way with us: For he hath a ſpecial complacency in this, and therein wonderfully diſcovers the bowels of his tender compaſſion toward his chaſtiſed and humbly ſubmiſſive children: *Surely* (ſaith he) *I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf thus, thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke; turn thou me and I ſhall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God: ſurely after that I was turned, I repented, and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea even confounded, becauſe I did bear the reproach of my youth: Is Ephraim my dear ſon, is he a pleaſant child, for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy on him ſaith the Lord*, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, 20. Thus when ye come ſubmiſſively to his hand, he comes as it were ſweetly to yours, and as ye gain nothing by your ſtriving with him, ſo ye loſe nothing, but gain much by your willingly ſtooping and ſilently ſubmitting to him: If ye *humble yourſelves in the ſight of the Lord, he ſhall lift you up*, Jam. iv. 10. *Humble yourſelves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time*, 1 Pet. v. 6.

Fifthly, If it be conſidered, That yē ſtand in need of all the troubles and afflictions that ye meet with; whenever *ye are in heavineſs through* one or more, or *manifold temptations*, it is always, and only, *if need be*, 1 Pet. i. 6. And if ye be well acquainted with the ſtate and poſture of your ſoul affairs, what graces of the ſpirit are to be quickened and drawn forth into more lively and vigorous exerciſe, what of thoſe precious ſpices in your gardens are to be blown upon, not only by the more gentle and ſoft ſouth-winds of conſolations, but alſo by the more ſharp and nipping north-winds of afflictions, and to be beaten as it were

in the mortar thereof, that they may ſend forth their pleaſant and fragrant ſmell; what religious duties are either much neglected, or but very lifeleſly, coldly, formally, lazily, ſuperficially and heartleſly performed, and to what a higher pitch of ſpirituality in the manner of performing them, they are to be wrought up unto; what luſts and corruptions are to be further mortified and ſubdued; how little your hypocriſy, your ſelf-love and ſelf-ſeeking, your pride, paſſion, impatiency, unpliableneſs and unſubmittedneſs to the will of God, your carnalneſs, earthly-mindedneſs, your immoderate and inordinate love to the things of the world, your murmuring, and fretting at, your diſatisfaction and diſcontent with your preſent lot; how little theſe, and many other corruptions are crucified and brought under; if, I ſay, you are well verſed in the knowledge of your ſpiritual condition, ye will upon ſerious and thorough reflections find, that ye ſtand in need of every affliction ye meet with, as to all the circumſtances thereof: or if ye do not, in ſo far ye are unacquainted with, and ſtrangers to yourſelves, and to the ſtate and poſture of your ſpiritual affairs; yet, ye will eaſily find, that all, even your heavieſt croſſes and afflictions, have enough to do to work you up to what you ſhould be; and though ſometimes ye may be diſpoſed to think, that ye could hardly bear any more, yet ye will upon due ſearch find that ye could have wanted nothing of what ye meet with, without a greater prejudice than the croſs hath brought along with it: We are naturally froward and peeviſh, bent to fretfulneſs and diſcontent, inclining either to reſtleſs endeavouring, to have our lot brought up to our ſpirits, than to be at ſuitable pains, to have our ſpirits brought down to our lot, and therefore have much need to be tamed and calmed by the croſs; this rugged and uneaſy temper of ſpirit, being the great hinderer, yea, oppoſite of that ſtayed and ſweet contentment of heart, with, and in every ſtate: which

is

is the very life of a Christian's life *consisting* (as the Lord saith) *not in the abundance of the things which we possess*, Luke xii. 15. but in our satisfiedness with them, whether abundant or not; to the attaining unto which blessed temper, the shortest and most compendious way, is in the *first* place to be well-pleased and satisfied with God himself, and with a solidly secured interest in him, and to endeavour in the *next* place, to be well-pleasing in his sight, to be gracious in his eyes, to stand well in his thoughts, even *to do always those things that please him;* John viii. 29. to which desirable frame of soul, if we were once through grace brought (whereto our bearing of the yoke, and putting our shoulders under the cross is not a little thro' God's blessing contributive;) O! how good natured then, and easy to please would we be found to be, and how ready to construe well all he doth to us? seldom out of humour (to speak so.) Now if we stand in need of all the afflictions we meet with, in all their most sad and sorrowful circumstances (as certainly we do, because God, who cannot lie, or mistake, hath said it,) why should we not submit ourselves to his will, in measuring them out to us? Or what just reason can there be, to be dissatisfied with, or to complain of God's giving to, and ordering that for us, whereof we stand in need, which we cannot want, unless being considerably prejudiced and worsted by the want?

Sixthly, If it be considered, That in all your chastisements and afflictions, God is graciously carrying on the blessed design of your spiritual *good* and *profit*, making them *all to work together* for that desirable end, causing them *turn to your salvation, through the help of the prayers* of others of his people, *and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ*, Rom. viii. 28. Phil. ii. 19. Giving you assurance by his faithful word of promise, that thereby *your iniquity shall be purged*, and *that this shall be all the fruit* (O! strange and admirable

ble condescension of grace, *all the fruit) to take away sin;* Isa. xxvii. 9. and that he will not chastise you *as parents according to the flesh do their children*, to wit, *for their own pleasure;* who, however they may have a general design of good to their children in their chastising of them, yet through a remainder of corruption in the best of them, they are often subjected to such hurries and transports of passion, when it comes to the act of chastisement, that they much forget to consult the good and advantage of the chastised child, and too much gratify their own pleasure and humour; but that he will chastise *for your profit, that ye may be made partakers of his holiness*, Heb. xii. 10. Now, if this be his design in chastising, and if this be the promised fruit of your chastisements and afflictions, why should ye not therein submit to his pleasure, which hath your own profit inseparably joined with it? If ye yourselves do not sinfully lay obstructions in the way thereof, as otherwise, so particularly by your being displeased with this his pleasure, which yet his grace in his own people, suffers not to be invincible nor final. I do not say, that our chastisements and afflictions do of themselves produce this profit, and bring forth this fruit; for alas! We may from doleful experience have ever now arrived at a sad persuasion, that we are proof against all applications, excepting that of sovereign, efficacious and all-difficulty conquering free grace, and that nothing will prevail save that alone: whatever means be made use of, this only must be the efficient producer of our profit: It is a piece of God's royal and incommunicable prerogative, which he hath not given out of his own hand to any dispensation, whether of ordinances, never so lively and powerful in themselves, or of providences never so cross, loudly alarming and clearly speaking, abstractly from his own blessing, effectually *to teach to profit*, Isa. xlviii. 17. and therefore he doth (as well he may) claim it to himself alone, as his peculiar privilege,

vilege, while he saith, *I am the Lord thy God that teacheth thee to profit.* Since then this is his design in all the chastisements inflicted on his own people, and since he only by his grace can make it infrustrably take effect, let him have our hearty allowance and approbation, to carry it on vigourously and successfully, and let us pray more frequently and fervently, that by his effectual teaching, our profiting may be made more and more to appear under our chastisements; and withal *in the multitude of our* sad *thoughts* about them, let *his comforts delight our souls*, and this comfort in particular, that in them all he graciously designs and projects *our profit*, even the making of us more and more to *partake of his holiness.*

Seventhly, If it be considered, That all our trials and troubles, are but of time-continuance, and will period with it; they are but *for a season*, 1 Pet. i. 6. yea, but *for a moment*, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *He will not contend for ever*, knowing well, if he should do so, *the spirits would fail before him, and the souls which he hath made*, Isa. lvii. 16. though they should follow close on you, and accompany you to your very dying day, yet then they will leave you, and take their last good night and everlasting farewell of you; *sorrow and sighing will* then for ever *fly away*, and *all tears* on whatsoever account, *shall then be wiped from your eyes*, Rev. vii. 17. and xxi. 4. It is a great alleviation and mitigation of the most grievous affliction, and of the bitterest and most extreme sorrow, to think, that not only it will have a term, day and date of expiration; but it will quickly in a very short time, even in a moment be over and at an end; (as a holy martyr said to his fellow-sufferer in the fire with him, *It is but winking, and our pain and sorrow is all over*) and that there shall be an eternal lease of freedom from it, and that everlasting solace, satisfaction and joy without any the least mixture of sorrow and sadness, shall succeed to it, and come in the room thereof: It is

but

but for the little ſpace of *threeſcore years and ten, or fourſcore* (Pſal. xc. 10.) which length moſt men never come, that his people are ſubjected to trouble, and what is that very ſhort moment and little point of time, being compared with vaſt and incomprehenſibly long eternity? In reſpect of which 'a thouſand years are but as one day, or as a watch in the night, when it is paſt', Pſal. xc. 4. And no doubt the little whiles trouble, ſadneſs and ſorrow of ſojourning and militant ſaints, is in the depth of divine wiſdom, ordered ſo, that it may the more commend and endear that bleſſed calm and tranquility, that fulneſs of pureſt joys, and thoſe moſt perfect pleaſures at his right hand, that triumphant ſaints ſhall for evermore enjoy.

Eightly, If it be conſidered, That all along the little moment that your trials and afflictions abide with you, they are, even the ſaddeſt and moſt ſevere of them, moderate, and through his grace portable and *light;* 'In meaſure he debateth with you, and ſtays his rough wind in the day of his eaſt wind', Iſa. xxvii. 8. And whatever difficulty ye ſometimes find under ſore preſſures, to get it ſolidly and practically believed, yet 'God is faithful, who hath promiſed, and will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it', 1 Cor. x. 13. *He is a God of judgment* (Iſa. xxx. 18.) and diſcretion, that ſuits his people's burthens to their backs, and wiſely proportions their ſtraits to their ſtrength: *He puts not new wine into old bottles*, Matth. ix. 17. Neither *doth he break the bruiſed reed*, Iſa. xlii. 3. And even 'when he hides his face, and is wroth with his children, and ſmites them for their iniquity, Iſa. xlii. 17, 18. It is only fatherly wrath; and however dreadful it may be, and difficult to be born, yet there is nothing vindictive in it; it is a father's anger, but contempered with a father's love, where alſo love predominates in the contemperature. And indeed the moſt

moſt extreme, and the very heavieſt of all our afflictions are moderated, and even *light* compared, *firſt*, With what your ſins deſerve, exceedingly far *beneath the deſert whereof ye are puniſhed*, Ezra ix. 23. Even ſo far, that ye may without all compliment, moſt truly ſay, 'That it is becauſe his compaſſions fail not, that ye are not conſumed,' Lam. iii. 22. that ye are kept out of hell, and free from everlaſting burnings, to which your many, various and grievouſly aggravated provocations, have made you moſt juſtly liable: So that ye have reaſon to think any affliction ſhort of everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of God, to be a highly valuable piece of moderation, and to ſay, 'Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin?' Lam. iii. 39. 'We will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe we have ſinned againſt him,' Mic. vii. 9. *2dly*, With what others of the people of God have readily met with, for 'ye have not reſiſted unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin,' Heb. xii. 4. We have it may be all this while been but *running with the footmen*, when they have been put *to contend with horſes*, Jer. xii. 5. *3dly*, With what ourſelves have ſometimes dreaded and been put to deprecate, when horrid guilt hath ſtared us in the face, and when we apprehended God to be very angry, even threatning, 'to ſmite us with the wound of an enemy, and with the chaſtiſement of a cruel one, to run upon us as a giant, to break all our bones: And again to ſhew himſelf marvellous upon us, by taking us by the neck and ſhaking us in pieces,' Jer. xxx. 14. Job xvi. 14. and 12. Job x. 16. *4thly*, With what our bleſſed Lord Jeſus ſuffered for his people, who all the while he ſojourned here on earth, was *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*, Iſa. liii. 4. and might moſt juſtly have ſaid beyond all men, 'I am the man that hath ſeen affliction by the rod of his wrath: Is there any ſorrow like unto mine, in the day when the Lord hath afflicted me?' And,

5thly, Being compared with that 'far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which they work for you,' 2 Cor. iv. 14. Seeing then that the ſharpeſt and foreſt of your afflictions are in theſe, and many other reſpects very moderate, gentle, eaſy, and light; Is there not reaſon why ye ſhould in them, without grudging, ſweetly ſubmit yourſelves to his will? Chearfully ſaying, it might have been much worſe, this falls infinitely ſhort of what we have deſerved, bleſſed be God that it is only thus, and no worſe.

Ninthly, If it be conſidered, That often when in any more than ordinary ſpiritual and lively frame of ſoul, ye have in prayer deſired the Lord, that he would take any way, and make uſe of any means he pleaſed (wherein your ſin might not be) to make you more ſerious in the exerciſe of godlineſs, more effectually to mortify your corruptions, and to further your conformity to his image in holineſs: And that ye ſhould, through his grace, be content, putting, as it were, a blank in his hand, to be filled up as himſelf in his own infinite wiſdom ſhould think fit, declaring, that ye were ſatisfied on the terms propoſed by Jeſus Chriſt, to be his diſciples, and to take up not only *a croſs*, or *the croſs* in general, but, Matth. xvi. 24. *your croſs* in particular, the croſs that ſhould be ſhaped out for you, however circumſtantiated: And when under ſome very ſad affliction he on the matter beſpeaks thus, I am now about to grant you your own deſire, though it may be in ſuch a way, and by ſuch a mean as either would have been none of your own chooſing, had it been left to your choice, or poſſibly ſuch as ye did not think of: Will ye be diſpleaſed with me, or miſtake my hearing of your prayers, fulfilling of your petitions, and granting you according to your own heart's deſire, becauſe I do it in my own way, and by means of your own chooſing, wherein ye left and allowed to me a latitude, and not in your way and by your means, which ye then

then renounced, as not thinking yourselves competent judges thereof? Alas! here we are often found at best to border upon a practical rewing, retracting, and lifting up again of the blank-submission which we professed to lay down before him; and to say by our fretting, repining, dissatisfaction, immoderate heaviness, and despondency of spirit, that we were somewhat rash, and not so well advised when we subscribed, and gave in such a submission and surrender of ourselves to him: That we did not think he would have taken such advantage of us, or would have put us so sore to it; and, that if we had thought he would have done so, we would have been better advised, before we had thus submitted to him, and with our consent put ourselves in his reverence; and that if it had been any thing *but this* we could have borne it (whereas he saith, nothing *but this;*) whereby we do not only reflect not a little upon him, as dealing unkindly, and doing what we would not have expected at his hand; but also make a sad and humbling discovery of much unsoundness in ourselves, as to our offering up of such general desires, and as to our making of such absolute submissions to him. Let us therefore, in order to the justifying of him as both righteous and kind, and to the vindicating of ourselves, at least from allowing of any unsoundness, dissimulation, or unfair, and merely complimental-dealing with God, in our submitting ourselves to him in the general, without any *but*'s or *if*'s, any *restrictions* or *exceptions*, hold to the submission given; sharply expostulating with, and severely chiding ourselves for this discovered practical contradiction and contravention, and we shall find that he hath done nothing unworthy of himself, nor in the least prejudicial to us, but what is according to our own most deliberate desires, and greatly to our advantage.

It were a very great mistake, from what is discoursed in this *consideration* if any should conclude, that

we intend either to commend or allow Christians, praying directly and expresly for crosses and afflictions, or for such and such afflictions in particular: For, beside that we neither find it commanded in the scriptures, nor allowedly (if at all) presidented or practised by the saints recorded there; and that it seems to be a sinful limiting of the sovereign God to a particular mean; we may easily know from sad experience, with what difficulty, repining, and fainting we often bear those crosses and afflictions that we are most clearly called to take on, and that are unavoidably laid upon us; and how lamentably little for the most part we profit by them. What hope or assurance could we then have that we should either carry Christianly under, or make suitable improvement of such crosses as we should unwarrantably seek, and pray for to ourselves? It is true, we find some of the saints, and those, stars of the first magnitude, as Moses, Job, Elias, David, and Jonas, in their distempered malcontent or fainting fits, passionately, prepostorously, and precipitantly praying, or rather wishing for death (for which they were not for the time in so good case) but that was not for death under the notion of affliction, but rather to prevent future and further afflictions, or to have a period put to presently incumbent ones. If it should here be said, why may not saints pray for afflictions since they seem to be promised in the covenant of grace, as Psal. lxxxix. 30, 31, 32. Hos. ii. 6, 7. and ver. 14. And since God hath graciously promised to bless all the afflictions of his people, and to make them turn to their spiritual good, profit, and advantage, as Rom. viii. 28. and Heb. xii. 10. and elsewhere? To the *first* part of the objection, it may be briefly *answered*, that these and other such are not properly and formally promises of the covenant of grace, but rather covenant-threatnings (for the covenant of grace hath its own threatnings suited to the nature thereof, as well as the covenant

of

of works hath its) though dipped (so to say) in covenant-grace and mercy. And to the *other* part of it as briefly, that God hath promised to bless and to cause to profit by such afflictions and chastisements as himself thinks fit to inflict and lay on; but not those which we seek and pray for to ourselves. Neither doth that scripture, Psal. cxix. 75. *I know—that in faithfulness thou hast afflicted me*, say any thing towards strengthning the objection, or invalidating the answers given to it: For the Psalmist only there humbly and thankfully acknowledgeth God's faithfulness in fulfilling his threatning, in afflicting him when he went astray, and in performing his promise in blessing his affliction to him, for preventing his after-straying, and making him learn better to keep his commandments; in both which he is faithful. All that is either expreſt or meant in this consideration, is, That the saints often pray God, that he would take his own way, and use his own means to bring about these great ends mentioned; wherein there is indeed at least a tacit insinuation, that if he in his wisdom see it meet to make use of the rod and affliction in order thereto, that they will not allow themselves to decline the same, nor to mistake him in it; but that rather they shall through grace be satisfied with, and bless him for fulfilling their petitions, and granting them according to their own hearts desires, though it be by such means: which is not praying for affliction, but a resolved and declared submission to infinite wisdom's love-choice of his own means, to effectuate and bring to pass the prayed for ends.

Tenthly, If it be considered, That it now neither grieveth nor troubleth any of all the glorified, triumphing company, who have palms in their hands, and are now before the throne of God, and of the Lamb, that they were exercised with so many, and so great trials and tribulations, while they were here below. It troubles not John the Baptist that he was imprisoned,

impriſoned, baſely murthered and beheaded there in a hole, without having any acceſs to give any public teſtimony before his death; and at the deſire of a wanton dancing damſel, through the inſtigation of her adulterous and inceſtuous mother: Nor Stephen (commonly called the proto-martyr) that he was ſtoned to death as a blaſphemer, for giving teſtimony to the moſt precious and comfortable truth of Chriſt's being the Meſſiah: Nor Paul that he was thrice beaten with rods, and received five times forty ſtripes ſave one, that he was in ſo many perils by ſea and land, in the city, in the country, and in the wilderneſs, by the Heathen, by his own country-men, and by falſe brethren; that he was ſtoned, and ſuffered all thoſe other things, whereof he gives an hiſtorical abridgement in his ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians, ch. xi. Nor doth it trouble any of all thoſe *worthies, of whom the world was not worthy*, that they were cruelly mocked, impriſoned, ſcourged, tortured, or tympaniſed, and racked, ſtoned, tormented, ſawn aſunder, killed with the ſword, tempted, driven to dens, and caves of the earth, and put to wander up and down in ſheep-ſkins, and goat-ſkins, whoſe martyrology the apoſtle briefly compendeth, Heb. xi. Nor doth it trouble any other of all the martyrs, ſaints, and ſervants of Jeſus, who have in the ſeveral ages of the church ſuffered ſo many and ſo great things while they were in the world: Nay, all theſe their ſufferings go to make up a conſiderable part of their ſong of praiſe in heaven: (Where the hiſtory of theſe wars of and for the Lord, will be very pleaſant to them to read, however ſore and bloody they were on earth:) And not only ſo, but thoſe of them who have ſuffered moſt, wonder much that they have ſuffered ſo little, and that they are come to ſo excellent and glorious a kingdom, through ſo little tribulation in the way to it. Believe it there will be as much matter of thankſgiving and praiſe to God found treaſured up under the

the plaits and foldings (to say so) of the most cross and afflicting providences, that ever the people of God met with here in the world, as under those that for the time were more smiling and satisfying. Let us then, valuing all things we meet with, according to the aspect they have on our spiritual and eternal state, (which is sure the justest and safest valuation of them) heartily allow him, to take his own will and way in afflicting us.

Eleventhly, If it be considered, That as this submission to the will of God, in cross and afflicting providences, is chronicled in the sacred records to the perpetual commendation of several of the saints; namely of Aaron, of whom it is said, when God had slain his two sons in a strange and stupendious manner, even by fire from heaven, for their presumptuous offering of strange fire before him, that *he held his peace*, Lev. x. 3. Of old Eli when he received a sad message, concerning himself and his house by the hand of young Samuel, who said, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. iii. 18. Of Job, after, by four several messengers (each of them coming immediately on the back of the other, so that he scarcely got leave to breathe betwixt, to finish his lamentable narration) the terrible alarming tidings were brought him, the plundering of his oxen and asses by the Sabeans, and the killing of the servants with the sword; concerning the consuming of his sheep and servants by the fire of God falling from heaven upon them; concerning the carrying away of his camels, and the killing of his servants by the Chaldeans; and concerning the smothering to death of all his sons and daughters, while feasting together, by the falling of the house upon them; who said, *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job is not sinning, nor charging God foolishly*, Job i. 21, 22. Of David, who in a croud of crosses, saith to God, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, be-*

cause

cauſe thou didſt it, Pſal. xxxix. 9. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. and who, when forced to flee from Jeruſalem, by his unnatural and rebellious ſon Abſalom, and ſending back the ark thither, with admirable compoſure and ſweet ſubmitting of ſoul, ſaid, 'If I ſhall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it and his habitation: But if he ſay thus, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do with me as ſeemeth good to him:' of Hezekiah, when that heavy meſſage was brought to him by the prophet Iſaiah concerning the Babyloniſh captivity, wherein his royal poſterity were to have their deep ſhare, who ſaid, *Good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken*, who ſaid moreover, *Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?* 2 Kings xx. 19. if the threatned doom and ſentence ſhall be for a while ſuſpended, and not preſently executed: And of thoſe Chriſtians, who, after they had with much weeping earneſtly intreated the apoſtle Paul, deſervedly very dear to them, not to go up to Jeruſalem, where the prophet Agabus had foretold he ſhould be apprehended, and put in bonds, and perceived that he was inflexibly reſolved at any rate of hazard to go thither, ceaſed, and ſubmiſſively ſaid, *The will of the Lord be done*, Acts xxi. 14. As, I ſay, it is thus chronicled to their commendation, ſo it is a piece of moſt beautiful and amiable conformity to the practice of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, of whom we ought *to be followers as dear children*, Epheſ. v. 1. in all thoſe things, wherein he is propoſed as a pattern for our imitation, who in a great and grievous agony of trouble, and when moſt terribly aſſaulted by a ſtrong combination of croſs and afflicting providences, and after conditionate deprecating of that bittereſt cup and blackeſt hour, pleaſantly, ſweetly, and ſubmiſſively ſubjoined, and ſaid to his father, *Nevertheleſs not my will, but thine be done: Not as I will, but as thou wilt*, Luke xxii. 42. Matt. xxvi. 32.

Twelfthly,

Twelfthly, and finally, If it be conſidered, That when the whole contexture and web of providences, and more eſpecially about the catholic, viſible, militant church, and every individual member thereof ſhall be wrought out, and in its full length and breadth (as it were) ſpread in the midſt of all the redeemed, perfected, glorified, and triumphant company of ſaints, ſtanding round about, and with admiration beholding it; there will not be found (to ſay ſo) one miſplaced thread, nor one wrong ſet colour in it all, but every thing will be found to have fallen in, in the fitteſt place, and in the moſt beautiful ſeaſon and order thereof. O! ſo rare, ſo remarkable, ſo renowned, and ſo raviſhing a piece, as it will by them all unanimouſly, and with one voice be judged and declared to be, even worthy of the moſt exquiſite art and infinite ſkill of the great worker thereof; the ſevereſt critics and moſt difficultly ſatisfiable of them all, while here below, about more public, and more particular croſs-providences, will then fully, and to the height be ſatisfied; and withal, without any the leaſt heſitation or jarring, readily and chearfully bear him this concordant teſtimony, that *he hath done all things well*, Mark vii. 37. every thing in particular, and all things in general, though when he was doing of them, they often preſumptuouſly took on them raſhly to cenſure, and to offer their impertinent and crabbed animadverſions on, and their amendations and alterations of ſeveral of them, and will moſt cordially bleſs him, that he wrought on in his own way, about his church, and each of themſelves, without conſulting them, or following their way, which would have quite marred the beauty, and darkned the luſtre and ſplendour of that moſt cloſe and curious divine contexture.

Every one of theſe conſiderations hath much reaſon in it, to perſuade you to this entire and abſolute ſubmiſſion to God's will and pleaſure, in what is croſs

to you, afflicted and ſorrowful Chriſtians! But O! how much weight and ſtrength of ſound ſpiritual reaſon is there in them all united together (beſides the many other excellent conſiderations, diſperſed up and down theſe choice ſermons, filled full with ſtrong cordials, fitted both to recover and to preſerve you from fainting, under your many ſeveral afflictions) powerfully to perſuade and prevail with you, even the moſt averſe, untoward, and moſt ſtubborn of you all, without further debate, demur, or delay, in thoſe things that are moſt afflicting to you, and do moſt thwart your inclinations, to come into his will, and pleaſantly, without any the leaſt allowed reluctancy, or gain-ſaying, to ſubmit to him? How might you thus poſſeſs your ſouls in patience, and how quiet, calm, ſedate, and compoſed might ye be, more eſpecially in troubleſome times, amidſt thoſe things wherewith others are kept in a continual hurry, almoſt to the hazard of being diſtracted by them?

Let them all, my *Noble Lord*, prevail with your Lordſhip in particular, reverently to adore, ſilently to ſtoop unto, and ſweetly to acquieſce in, the Lord's ſovereign, holy, and wiſe ordering your many and various complicated trials, and more eſpecially his late removing your excellent Lady, the deſire of your eyes, the Chriſtian and comfortable companion of your youth, by his ſtroke. As indeed all the ties of neareſt and deareſt relations, betwixt huſbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and ſiſters, &c. are capable of diſſolution, and will all ere long by death be actually diſſolved; there being but one tie and knot of marriage-union betwixt precious Jeſus Chriſt and the believer, that by divine ordination is eternally incapable of any diſſolution, even by death itſelf; which, though it diſſolve the ſtrait-union that is betwixt the ſoul and body, yet doth not at all looſe the ſtraiter bond of union that is betwixt him and both of them, but it remains ſtill inviolable; and by virtue

virtue thereof the believers vile dead body, ſhall be raiſed again at the laſt day, conformed to his own glorious body, and be re-united to the perfected ſoul, which two old intimates will then meet in far better caſe than when they were parted and pulled aſunder; for he is an huſband that cannot grow old, ſick, or weak, neither can he die: he is a huſband whoſe bride and ſpouſe is never a widow, neither hath he any relicts. The drawing on of which matchleſs match and marvellous marriage, is one great deſign of theſe ſweet ſermons, wherein pregnant reaſons are produced by this *friend of the bridegroom*, to perſuade ſinners to imbrace the offer thereof made to them in the goſpel; and to make them, who, by his own gracious and powerful inſinuations on their hearts, have entertained his propoſal, toward making up, and final cloſing of the match, to bliſs themſelves in their choice, and to bliſs him, that ever he was pleaſed to ſtoop ſo very low as to become a ſuiter to them, with a peremptory reſolution to admit of no refuſal, but infruſtrably to carry their heart's conſent to take him for their Lord, Head, and Huſband, to be to them a Saviour, a Phyſician, and Treaſure, even their *all in all*, their *all above all*, which day of eſpouſals, as it was *the day of the gladneſs of his heart*, ſo it will never be any grief of heart to them. Let all mutinous thoughts about his dealings with you be ſilenced with, *It is the Lord;* let not too much dwelling on the thoughts of your affliction, to the filling of your heart ſtill with ſorrow, incapacitate you for, nor divert you from, humbly aſking the Lord, what he aims at by all theſe diſpenſations, what he would have you to learn out of them, what he reproveth and contends for, what he would have you amending your hands in, and what he would have you more weaned, ſelf-denied, and mortified in, and what he would have you a further length, and a greater proficient in. He hath told you *the truth, that theſe things are expedient*

for you; ſtudy to find them to be ſo in your own experience. Sure he hath by them, written in great, legible, and capital characters, yea, even as with a ſun-beam, vanity, emptineſs, uncertainty, mutability, unſatisfactorineſs, and diſappointment upon the forehead of all creature-comforts, and with a loud voice called your Lordſhip, yet more ſeriouſly than ever, to ſeek after ſolid ſoul-ſatisfaction in his own bleſſed and all-ſufficient ſelf, where it is moſt certainly to be found, without all peradventure or poſſibility of miſtaking. Make haſte, my Lord, yet to come by a more cloſe confining of all your deſires and expectations of happineſs and ſatisfaction to your ſoul, to God only, contracting and gathering them in, from the vaſt and weariſome circumference of earthly comforts, and concentering them all in himſelf as their point; ſtudy through grace in a ſweet ſoliloquy, to beſpeak your ſoul thus, *My ſoul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him*, Pſal. lxii. 5. O bleſſed confinement of deſires and expectations of happineſs and ſatisfaction to the ſoul! where it is as impoſſible to meet with diſappointment, as it is impoſſible not to meet with it from every thing here whence it is looked for. Alas! it is the ſcattering of our expectations and deſires of happineſs among other objects beſide him, that breeds us all the diſquiet, anxiety, and vexation, whereas if we kept ourſelves through grace under a more cloſe and conſtant confinement to him, when this and that, and the other creature-comfort, whether perſon or thing were taken from us, there would be no deduction made from, nor any diminution made of our true happineſs; none of theſe, how dear and deſirable ſoever, being eſſentially conſtitutive of it, nor ſo much as bordering thereupon; and he in whom only all our happineſs lies, being *the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, without any variableneſs or ſhadow of turning.* There are ſome whom he loveth ſo well, that he cannot (to ſpeak ſo) find in his

his heart to see them thus to lay out their affections, and to dote upon any painted imagery happiness in creature-comforts; and therefore with design, he doth either very much blast them, as to the expected satisfaction from them; or quite remove them, that by making such a vacuity, he may make way for himself to fill it, and happily to necessitate the person, humbly, powerfully, and believingly, to put him to the filling of it; and it is a great vacuity that he *who fills heaven and earth* cannot fill, a little of whose gracious presence and manifested special love, can go very far to fill up the room that is made void by the removal of the choicest and most desirable of all earthly comforts and enjoyments. Happy they, who when they loose a near and dear relation, or friend, or any idol, they are fond of, are helped of God to make Jesus Christ, as it were, succeed to the same as its heir, by taking that loss as a summons, to transfer and settle their whole love on him; the object incomparably most worthy of it, as being *altogether lovely*, or *all desires*, Cant. v. 16. There is no earthly comfort, person, or thing, but hath somewhat in it that is not desirable, and that it would be better to want, but there is nothing in him that is not truly desirable, nor any thing out of him that is worthy to be desired.

I am, my *Noble Lord*, the more easily prevailed with and encouraged, to address the Dedication of these Sermons to your Lordship more particularly, when I remember *the unfeigned faith that dwelt in your grand-mother*, as another Lois; and in your mother, as another Eunice; and more lately, in your own choice Lady, who as another beloved Persis, *laboured much in the Lord;* and though she had a very short Christian race, (in which she was much encouraged by coming into your Noble Father's family, and her beholding, how hard your blest mother did run and press toward the mark, even when in the last stage,

and

and turning in a manner the laſt ſtoop of her chriſtian courſe;) yet it was a very ſwift one, wherein ſhe did quite out-run many that were in Chriſt long before her; (all three Ladies of honour almoſt, if I need ſay almoſt) without parallels in their times, in the ſerious and diligent exerciſe of godlineſs, and patterns worthy to be imitated by others, and I truſt in your Lordſhip's ſelf alſo; yea, and in ſeveral others of your elder and younger noble relations, for grace hath ſuch a draught of ſouls amongſt you, as it uſeth not often to have in ſocieties of ſo noble extract *(for not many noble are called;)* which, as it deſervedly draweth reſpect to ſuch of you, as are thus privileged, from the obſervers of it, ſo it layeth a mighty ſtrong obligation upon you, to be much for God, and in ſervice to your generation according to his will. Further, when I obſerve your Lordſhip's chriſtian and examplary carriage, under ſuch a conjunction and combination of ſo very croſs, and almoſt cruſhing calamitous providences, chooſing rather contentedly and ſatisfiedly to be (if it ſo pleaſe the Lord, and O! that it may not) the laſt of that ancient and honourable family, than to be found endeavouring to keep it from ſinking by any ſinful and unwarrantable courſe, particularly by defrauding juſt creditors (though the debt was not of your Lordſhip's own contracting) under whatever ſpecious pretexts and advantages of law; whereof many make no ſcruple, who, if they may keep up their ſuperfluities, care not if they ruin their friends who are engaged in ſuretyſhip for their debt, and to live on the ſubſtance of others. Moreover, when with great ſatisfaction I take notice how much your Lordſhip makes it your buſineſs to follow your noble anceſtors, in ſo far as they were *followers of Chriſt;* which many great men, even in the Chriſtian world, alas! do not much mind; not conſidering that it is true nobility, where God is the chief, and head of the kindred, and where religion is at the bottom;

and

and what renowned Rauleigh ſaith, *Hinc dictus Nobilis quaſi præ aliis virtute notabilis:* And what another ſaith, *Qui ab illuſtrium majorum ſplendida virtute degenerarunt nobilia portenta ſunt.* And finally, when I conſider, that in your Lordſhip's retirement and abſtraction from wonted converſe and dealing in buſineſs, you will have acceſs at leiſure to read them, whereby you may, through God's bleſſing, be ſweetly diverted from penſive, and not ſo profitable poring on your affliction, and be much inſtructed, convinced, reproved, directed, edified, ſtrengthened, and comforted. Read them then, my Lord, carefully, as I take it for granted you will, ponder and digeſt them well, and I hope, that they will, through grace, prove contributive to the bringing you to a conſiderable growth in holineſs, and to the making of *your ways and doings* more than ever ſuch, that others of his people obſerving the ſame, *ſhall be comforted, and made to think, and ſay, verily God hath not done in vain all that he hath done to this noble-man.*

That theſe ſubſtantial goſpel-ſermons may come to you all, nay, to all the readers of them, and to your Lordſhip more particularly, with ſhowers of goſpel-bleſſings, is the earneſt deſire of,

Dearly beloved, afflicted Chriſtians,

and my very noble Lord in particular,

your companion in tribulation,

deſirous alſo to be in the kingdom

and patience of Jeſus Chriſt,

and your ſervant, in the goſpel, for his ſake,

November
15th. 1682.

J. C.

UNTO THE

READERS,

And more particularly unto the

INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW, OF ALL RANKS.

THOUGH the whole field of the sacred and infallibly inspired scriptures, be very pleasant and beautiful (a spiritual, cool, and cleansing, a fructifying, fresh, refreshful, and wholesome air, breathing continually there) yet if we may compare some parts thereof with others, those wherein the treasure, precious Jesus Christ, lieth most obvious and open, are certainly most pleasant and beautiful. And amongst these, such as hold forth his sufferings, and himself as crucified, most evidently before men's eyes, have a particular and surpassing pleasantness and beauty in them. If so, then sure this *fifty third chapter* of the prophecy of Isaiah cannot but be looked on, as a transcendently pleasant, beautiful, sweet-smelling, and fragrant piece of divine scripture-field, wherein the evangelic prophet discourseth of the sufferings of Christ, as particularly and fully, as plainly and pathetically, even to the very life, as if he himself had been a spectator and eye-witness of them. However, this delightful chapter from beginning to end, as also the three last verses of the foregoing, are, by the very learned Grotius, most miserably perverted, while he industriously diverts it from the Messiah, and by stretching

ſtretching and curtailing thereof at his pleaſure (as the cruel tyrant Mazentius did the men he laid on his bed, to make them of equal length with it,) and wholly applies it to the prophet Jeremiah only, in the firſt place not denying that it hath accommodation to Chriſt, of whom he takes but little or no notice in all his annotations thereon. The impertinencies and wreſtings of which application, are convincingly held forth by famous Dr. Owen, that ſtrenuous oppoſer of Socinians (in his Vindiciæ Evangelicæ againſt Biddle, and the Racovian catechiſm) who looks on this portion of ſcripture as the ſum of what is ſpoken in the Old Teſtament, concerning the ſatisfactory death of Jeſus Chriſt. He was a burning and ſhining light in the reformed churches, though, now alas! to their great loſs, lately extinguiſhed. And indeed the dealing of the very learned Grotius, profeſſing himſelf to be a Chriſtian, with this moſt clear, and to all true Chriſtians, moſt comfortable ſcripture, is the more ſtrange, and even ſtupendious, conſidering, 1. That ſeveral paſſages in it, are in the New Teſtament expreſly applied to Chriſt, Matt. viii. 17. Mark xv. 28. Luke xxii. 27. Acts viii. 28, *&c.* 1 Pet. ii. 22. and 24. but not one ſo much as alluded to, in reference to Jeremiah. 2. That the ancient Jewiſh doctors, and the Chaldee Paraphraſt, (as Dr. Owen, in the aforeſaid learned and ſavoury book, gives an account) do apply it to him. 3. That a late doctor, of great note and honour among the Jews, Abrabinel affirmeth, That in truth he ſees not how one verſe of the whole (ſeveral of which he toucheth on) can be expounded of Jeremiah; and wonders greatly, that any wiſe man can be ſo fooliſh as to commend, much more be the author of ſuch an expoſition, (as one Rabbi Gaon had been) which is, ſaith he, ſo utterly alien, and not in the leaſt drawn from the ſcriptures. 4. That ſeveral Jews do profeſs, that their Rabbins could eaſily have extricated themſelves from all other places of

the prophets, (a vain and groundleſs boaſt) if Iſaiah in this place had but held his peace, as Hulſius, very lately, if not preſent, Hebrew profeſſor at Breda, declares, ſome of them did to himſelf. 5. That a Rabbi, by his own confeſſion, was converted from a Jew to a Chriſtian, by the reading of the fifty third of Iſaiah, as the excellent Mr. Boyl, in his delicate diſcourſes on the ſtile of the Holy Scriptures, informs us; yea, that divers Jews have been convinced and converted to the Chriſtian faith, by the evidence of this prophecy, as learned and laborious Mr. Pool affirms, in his lately publiſhed *Engliſh Annotations* on this ſcripture. 6. That the Socinians themſelves have not dared to attempt the accommodation of the things here ſpoken of, to any other certain and particular perſon than the Meſſiah, though being ſo much tortured thereby, they ſhewed good will enough to it. And, 7. That himſelf had before written a learned *Defence of the Catholic Faith concerning Chriſt's ſatisfaction againſt Socinus;* wherein alſo he improved to notable purpoſe ſeveral verſes of this ſame chapter: But in theſe latter Annotations, being altogether ſilent as to making any uſe of them that way, he, as much as he can, delivers that Deſperado, and his diſciples, from one of the ſharpeſt ſwords that lies at the very throat of their cauſe (for if the chapter may be applied to any other, as he applies it wholly to Jeremiah, no ſolid nor cogent argument can be drawn from it for confirming Chriſt's ſatisfaction) and by his never reinforcing of that Defence of his, againſt the aſſault made upon it by the Socinian Crellius, though he lived twenty years after, he ſeems, for his part, quite to have abandoned and delivered it up into the hand of theſe declared enemies of Chriſt's Satisfaction, yea, and of his Godhead. It is true indeed, that the learned Voſſius defends that Defence againſt the aſſault of Ravenſpergerus, a groaning divine, but it is on a quite different account from that of Crellius. By which

which annotations of his, as by ſeveral others on other ſcriptures, how much, on the matter at leaſt, great Grotius hath by abuſing his prodigious wit, and profound learning, ſubſerved the curſed cauſe of blaſphemous Socinus, and further hardened the already, alas! much and long hardned poor Jews; and what bad ſervice he hath done to our glorious Redeemer, and to his church ſatisfied for, and purchaſed by his blood, by his ſad ſufferings, and ſore ſoul-travel, moſt clearly and comfortably diſcourſed in this chapter, let the Lord himſelf, and all that love him in ſincerity, judge: I wiſh I could, and had reaſon, to ſay no worſe of this admirably learned perſon here, than that, *Quandoque dormitat Homerus.*

Very many and various, very great and moſt grievouſly aggravated ſufferings, were endured by Chriſt, not only in his body, nor only in his ſoul, by virtue of the ſympathy it had with his body from the intimate and ſtrict union betwixt them: but alſo, and mainly, in his bleſſed human ſoul immediately; ſince he redeemed, ſatisfied for, and ſaveth his peoples ſouls as well as their bodies. And the ſoul having principally ſinned, and being the ſpring and ſource of ſin; ſinners withal deſerving puniſhment in their ſouls as well as in their bodies; and being, without the benefit of his mediation, to be puniſhed eternally both in their ſouls and bodies, and mainly in their ſouls; there is no doubt, the ſame cogent reaſon for the Mediator's ſuffering in both parts of the human nature aſſumed by him, that there is for that nature's ſuffering which ſinned: which, his ſad complaints of the exceeding trouble of his ſoul, putting him to ſay thoſe ſtrange and ſtupendious words, *What ſhall I ſay?* And of the great ſorrow and heavineſs thereof, even to death, his amazement, ſtrong cries, and tears, with his agony and ſweat of blood, Joh. xii. 27. Mat. xxvi. 38. Mark xiv. 33. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7. (and that before any pain was cauſed to his body by men)

and his conditional depricating of that bitter cup, put beyond all reach of rational contradiction. And to think, or say, that only the fear of his bodily sufferings quickly approaching him, did make these sad impressions upon him; and draw these strange expressions from him, would make him who is Lord and Master to be of far greater abjectness of spirit than many of his servants the martyrs were, and to fall vastly below that holy heroic and magnanimous courage and resolution, wherewith they adventured on extreme sufferings, and most exquisite torments; which would be very unworthy of, and a mighty reflection upon him, who is the valiant *Captain of salvation, made perfect through sufferings, who drank of the brook in the way, and therefore lifted up the head*, Heb. ii. 10. Psal. cx. 7. But here is the great and true difference betwixt his sad and sorrowful deportment under his sufferings and their solacious, cheerful, and joyful deportment under theirs; that they through his suffering and satisfaction, were persuaded and made sensible of God's being pacified towards them, and were mightily refreshed by his gracious comforting presence with them amidst their sufferings; while he, on the contrary, looked upon himself as one legally obnoxious to punishment, fixed before the terrible tribunal of the justice of God, highly provoked by, and very angry at the sins of his people, who was in a most signal manner pouring out upon his soul the vials of his wrath and curse, which made him lamentably, and aloud, to cry out of desertion, though not in respect of the personal union, as if that had been dissolved, nor yet as to secretly supporting, yet as to such a measure at least of the sensibly comforting and rejoicing presence, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Here faith was in its meridian, though it was dark mid-night as to joy; wherewith as such, his body could not be immediately affected, spiritual desertion not falling under bodily sense. Whence we may

may see how justly the doctrine of Papists is to be exploded, who deny all suffering in his soul immediately, to salve their darling dream of his local descent as to his soul, while his body was in the grave, into hell, and to *Limbus Patrum*, to bring up thence into heaven the souls of the fathers; whom, without giving any reason, or alledging any fault on their part, they foolishly fancy, after their death till then, to have been imprisoned there, though quiet and under no punishment of sense, yet deprived of all light and vision of God, and so under the punishment of loss, the greatest of punishments, even by the confession of some of themselves, whereby they put those holy and perfected souls (for there they say there is no more purgation from sin, that being the proper work of their profitable *purgatory*) in worse case all that length of time after their death, than they were when alive on the earth, where doubtless they had often much soul-refreshing fellowship with God, and the light of his countenance lifted up upon them.

Neither were these his sufferings in soul and body, only to confirm the doctrine taught by him, if that was at all designed by him as an end of his sufferings, which were so much stumbled at in that time, which yet I will not debate, nor peremptorily deny, his doctrine being rather confirmed by his miracles and resurrection. Nor were his sufferings only to leave us an example and pattern how we should suffer, as non-christian and blasphemous Socinians aver, which were mightily to depretiate, and disparage, nay, to enervate and quite make void his sufferings, by attributing no more to them than may be attributed to the sufferings of his servants and martyrs. Its true, his example was an infallible directory, the example of all examples, but theirs not so: yet this doth not at all influence any alteration of the nature of the end. But they were chiefly undergone by him for his people, and in their stead, and sustaining their persons,

perſons, room, and place, truly and properly by the ſacrifice of himſelf to ſatisfy divine juſtice for their ſins. And who I pray can put any other comment on theſe ſcripture-expreſſions, without manifeſt perverting and wreſting of them; *He made him to be ſin for us who knew no ſin, Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us: Who his ownſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 24. (which is by the apoſtle ſubjoined as a ſuperior end of his ſufferings to that of leaving us an example, diſcourſed by him immediately before.) *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities, and the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him: The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all; for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken; when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin: he bore the ſins of many; in whom we have redemption through his blood; who is the propitiation for our ſins*, Iſa. liii. 5, 6, 8, 10, 12. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. 1 John ii. 2. and the like.

Nor did he undergo theſe ſad ſufferings for all men in the world, to ſatisfy juſtice for them, and to reconcile them to God, but only for the elect, and ſuch as were given unto him.

For, Firſt, *The chaſtiſement of their peace* only was *laid on him, who are healed by his ſtripes*, as it is, ver. 5. of this fifty-third of Iſaiah, *For the iniquities of my people was he ſtricken*, ſaith the Lord, ver. 8. The ſame who are called the Mediator's people, Pſal. cx. 3. (For ſaith bleſſed Jeſus to his Father, John xvii. 10. *All mine are thine, and thine are mine*) *Who ſhall*, without all peradventure or poſſibility of miſgiving, *be made willing in the day of his power. He only bare the iniquities of thoſe whom he juſtifieth by his knowledge*, ver. 11. For otherwiſe the prophet's reaſoning would not be conſequent: *He only bare the iniquities of as many tranſgreſſors as he makes interceſſion for*, verſe 12. And that he doth not make interceſſion for all, but

for

for thoſe only who are given to him, that is, all the elect, is undeniably manifeſt from John xvii. 9. where himſelf expreſly ſaith, *I pray not for the world, but for thoſe whom thou haſt given me.* Now God's eternal, electing love, and his giving the elect to the Mediator in the covenant of redemption, to be ſatisfied for, and ſaved by him; and his interceſſion for them, are commenſurable and of equal extent, as is moſt clear from John xvii. 6. where he ſaith, *Thine they were* (to wit, by election) *and thou gaveſt them to me*, to wit, in and by the covenant of redemption (God's decree of election being in order of nature prior to this donation, or gift of the elect in the covenant of redemption) compared with ver. 9. where he ſaith, *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou haſt given me, for they are thine.* It is obſervable, that he ſaith twice over, *I pray for them*, manifeſtly and emphatically reſtricting his interceſſion to them, and excluding all others from it. Why then ſhould not this ſacrifice (the price of the redemption of thoſe elected and given ones, agreed upon in that covenant betwixt thoſe two mighty parties) be commenſurable with the former three? eſpecially ſince he ſaith, ver. 19. *For their ſakes ſanctify I myſelf*, or ſeparate myſelf to be a ſacrifice. 2. Chriſt's ſatisfaction and his interceſſion being the two parts of his prieſtly office, and his interceſſion being founded on his ſatisfaction, as it is clear, ver. 12. of this fifty-third of Iſaiah: Yea, a very learned man affirms, That Chriſt's appearance in heaven, and his interceſſion, are not properly ſacerdotal acts, but in ſo far as they lean on the virtue of his perfected ſacrifice. What juſt, good, or cogent reaſon can there be to make a disjunction betwixt thoſe parts of his office, and to extend the moſt difficult, operoſe, and coſtly part to all men, and to narrow the other, which is the more eaſy part, as that whereby he only deals for the application of what he had made a purchaſe of by his ſatisfaction, which

which put him to much ſad and ſore ſoul-travel, to ſecure it to the elect and given ones? 3. Doth not the ſcripture hold forth his death, and the ſhedding of his blood, as the great demonſtration of his ſpecial love to his own elect people? As is clear elſe-where, ſo particularly, John xv. 13. *Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* Nay, purchaſed reconciliation through the death of Chriſt, is, by the Holy Ghoſt, made a greater evidence of divine love in ſome reſpect, than the glorification of the reconciled, according to what the apoſtle ſaith, Rom. v. 10. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life.* 4. All the other gifts of God to ſinners, even the greateſt ſpiritual ones, fall vaſtly below the giving of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, *that gift of God*, by way of eminency, as the apoſtle reaſoneth irrefragably, for the comfort of believers, Rom. viii. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* Will he give the greateſt gift, and not give the leſſer? as juſtification, adoption, ſanctification, and glorification; which, how great ſoever in themſelves, are yet leſſer than the giving of Chriſt himſelf to the death; and if it be undeniably certain that he giveth not theſe to all which are the leſſer and lower gifts, why ſhould it be thought that he hath given the higher and greater? 5. Shall that grand expreſſion of the ſpecial love of God, be made common, by extending it to all the world, the greateſt profligates and atheiſts not excepted, no not Pharaoh, nor Ahab, nor Judas the traitor, nor Julian the apoſtate, nay, nor any of all the damned reprobates, who were actually in hell, when he died and ſhed his blood? 6. If he died thus for all, it ſeems that the new ſong of the redeemed, Rev. v. would have run and ſounded better thus, Thou haſt redeemed *us all and every man*, of every kindred

kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, to God by thy blood, than as it there ſtands, by inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, *Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* But who may preſume by ſuch an univerſality to extend and enlarge what he hath ſo reſtricted, and to make that common to all which God hath peculiarized to a few favourites? but the Author having ſpoken much, to better purpoſe, on this head in theſe ſermons, I need add no more here.

I ſhall only further ſay of theſe aſtoniſhing, in a manner non-pluſſing and ſurpaſſing great ſufferings of bleſſed Jeſus, that, as they were equivalent to what all the elect deſerved by their ſins, and ſhould have ſuffered in their own perſons throughout all eternity, conſiſtently with the innocency and excellency of his perſon, and with the dignity of his mediatorial office. Therefore it is ſaid, verſe 9. *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*, or as it is in the original, *in his deaths*, in the plural number, as if he died the death of every one of the elect, or as if there had been a conjunction and combination of all their deaths in his own death; and verſe 6. That *the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all*, or as the word is, *Made the iniquity of us all to meet on him*, there having been a ſolemn appointment and rendezvous (as it were) of all the iniquities of all the elect, more common and more peculiar, in all their various aggravating circumſtances, not ſo much as one committed ſince Adam's firſt tranſgreſſion, or to be committed to the day of judgment, being abſent in the puniſhment of them upon his perſon. No wonder that ſuch a load of innumerable thouſand and millions of iniquities made him heavily to groan, and that the conſideration thereof made great Luther ſay, *That Chriſt was the greateſt ſinner in the world*, to wit, By imputation of the guilt of the ſins of the elect to him,

and by his having had the punishment of them all laid upon his person. So we may from them be instructed in these things.

First, Concerning the height of the holy displeasure and detestation, that the majesty of God hath at sin, the only thing in the whole world that his soul hates, and which in the vile and abominable nature of it, hath an irreconcilable antipathy to, and enmity against his infinitely pure, holy, and blessed nature, and hath a tendency, could it possibly be effected, to seek after the destruction and annihilation of the very being of God, and is interpretatively *Deicide;* the language of it being, *O that there were not a God;* that he cannot behold it in his own sinless, innocent, and dearly beloved Son, though but by imputation (for he was not made formally the sinner, as Antinomians blasphemously aver) but he will needs, in so terrible a manner, testify his great dislike of, and deep displeasure at it, and take such formidable vengeance on it, even in his person. Ah! the nature of sin, which God, who is of purer eyes, cannot, where-ever it be, behold, without perfect abhorrency of it, is but little throughly understood and pondered: Would we otherwise dare to dally and sport with it, or to take the latitudes in committing of it at the rates we do? I have some times thought, that it is an error in the first concoction (to say so) of religion in many professors of it, and pretenders to it, that we have never framed suitable apprehensions of the most hateful, vile, and abominable nature of sin (which hath a great influence on the superficialness and carelessness in all duties and practices of religion) and that many of us had need to be dealt with, as skilful school-masters use to deal with their scholars that are foundered in the first principles of learning, lest they prove but novices all their days; to bring them back again to these, even to be put to learn this first lesson in religion better, and more thoroughly to understand the jealousy

of

of God, at this curſed thing *ſin;* for which, though he graciouſly for the ſake of theſe ſufferings of Chriſt pardons the guilt of it to his people, and hears their prayers, yet will needs *take vengeance on their inventions*, Pſal. cxix. 8. be they never ſo ſeriouſly, holily, and eminently ſerviceable to him, and to their generation according to his will, whereof Moſes, the man of God, is a memorable inſtance. That *ancient* conceived rightly of the nature of ſin, who ſaid, *That if he behoved neceſſarily, either to commit the leaſt ſin, or go to hell to be tormented there eternally, he would rather wiſh to deſire to go to hell, if he could be there without ſin.*

Secondly, Concerning the ſeverity of divine juſtice in puniſhing ſin, whereof its puniſhment in the perſon of the Son of God at ſuch a rate, is one of the greateſt, cleareſt, and moſt convincing evidences imaginable, to whom he would not abate one farthing of the elect's debt, but did with holy and ſpotleſs ſeverity exact the whole of it; and though he was the *Father's Fellow*, yet he would needs have him *ſmitten with the awaked ſword*, Zech. xiii. 7. of ſin-revenging juſtice and wrath: As if all the executions that had been done in the earth on men for ſin, as on the old world of the ungodly, drowned by the deluge: On the miſcreant inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of thoſe other cities, upon whom he ſhowered down liquid flames of fire and brimſtone, even ſomewhat of hell in a manner out of heaven *(cœlum pluebat Gehennam)* burning them quick, and frying them to death in their own ſkins: On Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their aſſociates, upon whom the earth opened and ſwallowed them up in a moſt ſtupendious manner alive, the reſt being conſumed by fire ſent down from heaven: On the one hundred eighty-five thouſand men of Senacherib's army, all ſlain in one night by an angel: And on the Iſraelites, who, by many and various plagues were waſted and worn out to the num-

ber of ſix hundred thouſand fighting men in the ſpace of forty years; reflections on which made Moſes, a witneſs of all, with aſtoniſhment to cry out, *Who knows the power of thy anger?* Pſal. xc. 11. As if, I ſay, all theſe terrible executions of juſtice, had been done by a ſword aſleep, or in the ſcabbard, in compariſon of the execution it did on Jeſus Chriſt the elects ſurety againſt whom it *awakened*, was unſheathed, furbiſhed, and made to glitter: So that we may ſay, had all the ſons and daughters of Adam, without the exception of ſo much as one, been eternally deſtroyed, it would not have been a greater demonſtration of the ſeverity of the juſtice of God in puniſhing ſin.

Thirdly, Concerning the greatneſs, incomprehenſible vaſtneſs, and unparalleledneſs of the love of God to the elect world, which he ſo loved (O wonderful *ſo!* Eternity will be but ſufficient to unfold all that is laid up in that myſtery *ſo;* an ουτω that hath not an ως, an *ita* that hath not a *ſicut*, a *ſo* that hath not an *as*) *That he gave his only begotten Son*, John iii. 16. to ſuffer all theſe things, and to be thus dealt with for them: And of the Mediator who was content, though *thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, to empty himſelf, and be of no reputation, to take on him the ſhape of a ſervant*, Philip. ii. 6, 7, 8. to be *a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*, to be *chaſtiſed, ſmitten, wounded, and bruiſed for their iniquties*, Iſa. liii. 3, 5. To ſtep off the throne of his declarative glory, or of his glory manifeſted to the creatures, and in a manner to creep on the foot-ſtool thereof in the capacity of a worm, and *to become obedient even unto the death*, the ſhameful and curſed death of the croſs: This is indeed matchleſs and marvellous love, *Greater than which no man hath, to lay down his life for his friend*, John xv. 13. But he being *God-man*, laid down his life for his enemies, that he might make them friends, Rom. v. 10. *O! the height, and depth,*

and

and length of the love of Christ! Eph. iii. 9, 10. whereof when all that can be said is said, this must needs be said, *That it is love that passeth*, not only expression, but *knowledge*, its dimensions being altogether unmeasurable: We may say, if it had seemed good to the Lord, and had been compatible with his spotless justice, and with his infinite wisdom, as supreme rector and governor of the world, giving a law to his creatures, to have pardoned the sins of the elect in the absoluteness of his dominion that knows no boundary, but what the other divine attributes set to it, without any intervenient satisfaction to his justice at all (which needs not to be debated here, especially since God hath determined, and in the scriptures of truth made publication of his determination, that he will not pardon sin without a satisfaction, and particularly without this satisfaction made by Jesus Christ;) it would not have been a greater and more glorious demonstration of the freeness of his love than he hath given, in pardoning them through the intervention of so difficult and toilsome, of so chargeable and costly a satisfaction, as is the sad sufferings, and the sore soul-travel of his own dear Son; who yet is pleased to account sinners coming to him, and receiving good from him, a satisfaction for all that soul-travel: And indeed, which of these is the greatest wonder, and demonstration of his love, whether that he should have undergone such soul-travel for sinners, or that he should account their getting good of it, satisfaction for the same, it is not easy to determine, but sure both in conjunction together make a wonderful, even a most wonderful, demonstration of love.

Fourthly, Concerning what dreadful measure all they may look for, who have heard of these sufferings of Christ, and make not conscience in his own way to improve them, for their being reconciled to God thereby, and whose bond to justice will be found still standing over their heads uncancelled in their own name,

name, as proper debtors without a surety. When the innocent Son of God, *who had never done wrong, and in whose mouth no guile was ever found*, Isa. liii. 9. having but became surety for the elect's debt, was thus hotly pursued, and hardly handled, and put to sad soul-trouble, and to cry, *What shall I say?* John xii. 27. And falling on the ground with tears in his eyes, in much sorrow and heaviness even to death, and in a great agony, causing a sweet of blood, tho' in a cold night, and lying on the earth, conditionally to pray for the passing of that cup from him, and for his being saved from that hour; so formidable was it to his holy humane nature, which had a sinless aversation from, and an innocent horror at what threatned ruin and destruction to itself simply considered; and which, had it not been mightily supported by the power of the Godhead united thereto in his person, would have quite shrunk and fallen under such an heavy burden, and been utterly swallowed up by such a gulf of wrath: What then will sinners, even all the bankrupt debtors, not having seriously sought after, nor being effectually reached by the benefit of his suretiship, do, when they come to grapple with this wrath of God, when he will fall upon them as a giant, breaking all their bones, and as a roaring lion, *tearing them to pieces when there will be none to deliver?* Psal. l. 22. *Will their hands be strong, or their hearts be able to endure in the day that he shall deal with them?* Ezek. xxii. 14. Then, O! then *they will be afraid, and fearfulness will take hold of them*, and make them say, *Who can stand before the devouring fire, and who can dwell beside the everlasting burnings?* Isa. xxxiii. 14. and *to cry unto the hills and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of the Lamb, and of him that sits on the throne, for the day of his fierce wrath is come, and who is able to stand?* Rev. vi. 16, 17. then it will be found in a special manner to be *a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. x. 31.

All

All such may see in the great sufferings of Christ, as in the clearest glass, what they are to look for, and most certainly meet with; for if it was thus *done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* Luke xxiii. 31. O! it is a sad, even one of the sadest subject of thought, to think, that a rational creature shall be eternally supported, preserved, and perpetuated in its being, by the one hand of God's omnipotency, that it may be everlastingly capable of terrible vengeance, to be inflicted by the other hand of his justice.

Fifthly, Concerning the very great obligation that lieth on believers to love Christ Jesus, who hath thus commended his love to them, by undergoing all these sad sufferings for their sakes; even out of love to them to become a curse, to bleed out his precious life, and to pour out his soul to death for them; which to do he was under no necessity, nor in the least obliged by them, being infinitely removed from all possibility of being reached by any obligation from his creatures, whom he loved, and for whom he designed this grand expression of his love, the laying down of his life for them, before they or the world had any being; nay, being by their sins infinitely disobliged. Ah! that most of these whom he loved so much, should love him (who is altogether lovely) their duty, his friends and interests for his sake so little! even so very little, that if it were possible he could rue and repent of what he hath done and suffered, to commend his love to them, they would tempt him to it; and indeed there is nothing that more speaks forth the freeness of his love than this, that he should love them so fervently, and continue thus to love them, even *to the end*, who are often so very cool in their love to him. Sure when such are in any measure themselves, they cannot but love themselves the less, and loath themselves the more, that they love him so little, and earnestly long for that desirable day, wherein he shall be *admired*

ed in and by *all them that believe*, and when he ſhall be loved as well as ever they deſired to love him, and as well as he ſhall will them to love him, and when they ſhall be in an eternal extaſy and tranſport of admiration at his love.

Sixthly, Concerning the little reaſon that believers have to think much of their ſmall and petty ſufferings undergone for him: For what are they all, even the greateſt and moſt grievous of them, being compared with his ſufferings for them? They are but as little chips of the croſs, in compariſon of the great and heavy end of it that he bore, and not worthy to be named in one day with his: All the ſad and ſorrowful days and nights that all the ſaints on earth have had under their many and various, and ſadly circumſtantiated croſſes and ſufferings, do not by thouſands of degrees, come near unto, and far leſs equal that one ſad and ſorrowful night, which he had in Gethſemane (beſides all the ſorrows and griefs he endured before that time) where he was put to conflict with the awakened ſword of ſin-revenging juſtice, that did moſt fiercely attack him, without ſparing him: which terrible combat laſted all that night, and the next day, till three o'clock in the afternoon, when that ſharpeſt ſword, after many ſore wounds given him, killed him outright at laſt, and left him dead upon the place, who yet, even then when ſeemingly vanquiſhed and quite ruined, was a great and glorious conqueror, having *by death overcome and deſtroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and having ſpoiled principalities and powers, making a ſhew of them openly, and triumphing over them in his croſs*, Heb. ii. 14. Col. ii. 15. The ſpoils of which glorious victory believers now divide, and ſhall enjoy to all eternity. Ah! that ever the ſmall and inconſiderable ſufferings of the ſaints, ſhould ſo much as once be made mention of by them, where his ſtrange and ſtupendious ſufferings offer themſelves to our notice.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, Concerning the unſpeakably great obligation that lieth on believers, readily, pleaſantly and chearfully, not only to do, but alſo to ſuffer for Chriſt, as he ſhall call them to it, even to do all that lieth in their power for him, and to ſuffer all that is in the power of any others to do againſt them on his account, who did willingly, and with delight do and ſuffer ſo much for them. They have doubtleſs good reaſon heartily to pledge him in the cup of his croſs, and to drink after him, there being eſpecially ſuch difference betwixt the cup that he drunk, and that which they are put to drink. His cup was thick with the wrath of God, having had the dregs thereof in a manner wrung out to him therein, ſo that it was no wonder that the very ſight of it made him conditionally to ſupplicate for its departure from him, and that the drinking of it put him into a moſt grievous agony, and caſt him in a great ſweet of blood; yet ſaith he on the matter, either they or I muſt drink it, they are not able to drink it, for the drinking of it will diſtract them and make them mad, will poiſon and kill them eternally; but I am able to drink it, and to work out the poiſon and venom of it, and though it ſhall kill me, I can raiſe up and reſtore myſelf to life again; therefore Father, come with *it*, and I will drink it up and drink it out: this to the everlaſting welfare of theſe dear ſouls; *Not my will, but thine be done;* for thus it was agreed betwixt thee and me in the covenant of redemption. When as there is love from bottom even to brim in our cup (whatever mixture may ſometimes be of paternal and domeſtic juſtice, proper and peculiar to God's own family, and which, as the head and father thereof, he exerciſeth therein) not ſo much as one dram of vindictive wrath being left therein. Ah! it is both a ſin and a ſhame, that there ſhould be with ſuch, even with ſuch, ſo much ſhyneſs and ſhrinking, to drink after him in the cup of his croſs, eſpecially conſidering that there is ſuch a high

degree of honour put upon the ſuffering believer for Chriſt, above and beyond what is put on other believers in him, ſo that in the ſcripture account, the ſuffering believer is not *only* but *alſo*, according to what the apoſtle ſaith, Philip. i. 29. *To you it is given in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake.*

Eighthly, Concerning what mighty obligation lieth on believers to mourn and weep, to be ſad and ſorrowful for ſin. How can they look on him whom they have thus bruiſed, wounded, and pierced by their ſins without tears in their eyes, without mourning for him, and being in bitterneſs as a man is for his firſt-born, and for his only begotten ſon? when they think (as all of them on ſerious conſideration will find reaſon to think) that if their ſins kept the appointment and rendezvous, when all the ſins of all the elect did meet and were laid on him, then ſure there came no greater company, and more numerous troop of ſins, to that ſolemn rendezvous from any of all the redeemed than came from them; and that he had not a heavier load and burden of the ſins of any than he had of theirs, whereby he was even preſſed as a cart is preſſed down under the ſheaves, and was made moſt grievouſly to groan, even with the groanings of a deadly wounded man; and that if he was wounded and pierced by their iniquities, then ſurely he was not more deeply wounded and pierced by the iniquities of any than by theirs. O! what mourning ſhould this cauſe to them? Even ſuch mourning as was at Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo, on the occaſion of the ſad ſlaughter and death of that good and deſirable king Joſiah? This is indeed one of the moſt genuine and kindly, one of the moſt powerful and prevalent, one of the ſweeteſt and ſtrongeſt ſprings of, and motives to, true goſpel-repentance, ſorrow and mourning for ſin.

Ninthly, Concerning the notable and non-ſuch obligation

ligation that lieth on believers, to ſtudy the crucifixion and mortification of ſin. Was it not their ſins that crucified and killed precious Jeſus Chriſt, the prince of life? Was it not their ſins that violently drove the nails through his bleſſed hands and feet, and thruſt the ſpear through his ſide, to the bringing forth of water and blood? Shall they not in their burning zeal and love to him, and in the height of holy indignation at themſelves, be avenged on that which brought ſuch vengeance on him? Shall they not ſeriouſly ſeek to be the death of that which brought him to death, and whereof the death and deſtruction, was one of his great deſigns therein, on which he was ſo intent, that in the proſecution of it, he did amidſt his dying pangs and agonies breathe out his ſoul. O! let it never be heard, for ſhame, that ever any of them ſhall find the leaſt ſweetneſs in that accurſed thing, that was ſo bitter to him; that ever any of them ſhall be found to dally with, or hug that ſerpent and viper in their boſom, that ſo cruelly ſtung him to death.

But this being the great ſubject of theſe following ſermons, wherein *the preacher* being in a good meaſure wiſe, hath *ſought to find out acceptable words*, Eccleſ. xii. 10, 11. *and words*, I hope, *of uprightneſs and truth;* (O that they may be to the readers *as goads and nails faſtened by him, who is the maſter of aſſemblies*) I ſhall inſiſt no farther, only I may humbly ſay, That to my knowledge, none have preached on this whole *chapter* to better purpoſe every way. Many may have done virtuouſly, but it is probable, he will be found to *excel them all:* Nay, if I ſhould ſay, that for any thing I know, this book is amongſt the beſt books of this nature the world hath ſeen, I ſuppoſe hardly will any judicious Chriſtian, thoroughly exerciſed to godlineſs, after he hath read it all over, and pondered it, think that I have greatly, if at all, hyperbolized.

There are in these choice sermons, depths as it were for elephants to swim in (whereof his surprising, sublimely spiritual, and very deep divine discourses, concerning the nature of Christ's *intercession*, and the right improvement of it, in the last six sermons, is a notable instance) and shallow for lambs to wade in. There is in them *milk for babes in Christ*, and *stronger meat for such as are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, Heb. v. 13, 14. Nay, I may in a good measure, say of these sermons, as it is said of the learned discourse of a late great man, *That in the doctrinal part of several of them, ye will find the depth of polemical divinity, and in his inferences from thence, the sweetness of practical; some things that may exercise the profoundest scholar, and others that may edify the weakest Christian; nothing* readily *is more nervous and strong than his reasonings, and nothing more sweetly and powerfully affecting than his applications.* There is in them much for information of the judgment, for warming the affections, and for direction toward a gospel-becoming conversation; there is much for clearing and resolving the doubts and difficulties of more weak and darkened Christians, and much for edifying, confirming, and establishing of more grown ones; there is much for conviction, reproof, warning, humbling, for stirring up and provoking to the serious exercise of godliness, and much for the comforting and refreshing of such as stand in need, and are capable of consolation; there is much for discovering, rousing, awakening, and alarming of carnal, secure, unsound, hollowed-hearted, and hypocritical professors of religion, and much for beating and hammering down of the pride of conceited, self-justifying professors; much for training up of young beginners, and much for advancing and carrying on in their Christian course such as are entered into it, and have made any tolerable progress therein: In a word, he doth in a great measure *approve himself*

to

to God as a work-man that needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, 2 Tim. ii. 15. and as a skilful and faithful steward, giving to every one his portion in *due* kind, measure, and season.

It may be some readers will think, that there are in these sermons, several coincidencies of purposes, and repetitions: To which I shall but presume to say, That beside that there is a great affinity amongst many of the purposes delivered by the prophet in this piece of his prophecies, if not a holy co-incidency of them, and a profitable repetition now and then of the same thing in different expressions; as there is in some other scriptures, without any the least imputation to them, as that truly noble and renowned gentleman Mr. Boyle, sheweth in his elaborate, eloquent, and excellent *considerations, touching the style of the Holy Scriptures:* And that the same means, and almost the same expressions, may very pertinently be made use of, to clear and confirm different points of doctrine: It will be found, that if there be in so many sermons, or discourses, on subjects of such affinity, any co-incidencies, or repetitions, they are at such a convenient distance, and one way or other so diversified, and appositely suited to the subject of his present discourse, that the reader will not readily nauseate, nor think what is spoken in its place, impertinent, superfluous, or needless, though somewhat like it hath been said by him in some other place: or if there be any not only seeming, but real repetitions of purposes and expressions, as *they have not been grievous* (Phil. iii. 1.) to the preacher, so he with the apostle Paul judged them *needful* at the time for the hearers.

And now, as for you, *much honoured, right worthy*, and *very dearly beloved inhabitants of the city of Glasgow*, let me tell you, that I have sometimes of late much coveted, to be put and kept in some capacity, to do the churches of Christ, and you in particular, this piece of service, in putting to the press these

sweet

ſweet ſermons on this choice ſcripture before I die. And indeed after I had gone through a good number of them, not without conſiderable toil, and difficulty (having all along, had no notes of his own, but the ſermons as they were taken haſtily with a current pen from his mouth, by one of his ordinary hearers, no ſcholar, who could not therefore ſo thoroughly and diſtinctly take up ſeveral of the purpoſes handled by the preacher) the Lord was pleaſed to give me a ſtop, by a long continued ſharp affliction, not altogether without ſome little more remote and gentle threatnings of death: But he to whom the iſſues of death do belong, graciouſly condeſcended to ſpare me a little, that I might gather ſome ſtrength to go thro' the remainder of them. I have much reaſon to think, that if I had been preaching the goſpel to you, theſe twenty years paſt, wherein we have been in holy providence ſeparated (which hath been the more afflicting to me, that ye were in my heart to have lived and died with you; and if it had ſo ſeemed good in the eyes of the Lord, it would have been to me one of the moſt refreſhing and joyful providences I could have met with in this world, to have had fair acceſs through his good hand upon me, and his gracious preſence with me, to have preached the goſpel to you, a while before my going hence and being no more) I ſhould not by very, very far, have contributed ſo much to your edification, as theſe few ſermons may, and, I hope through God's bleſſing ſhall. Several of you heard them preached by him, when he was alive amongſt you, and now when he is dead, he is in a manner preaching them over again to you (O that ſuch of you as then were not taken in the preaching of them might be ſo now in the ſerious reading of them!) and by them ſpeaking to thoſe of you that did not then hear them, who, as I ſuppoſe, are now the far greateſt part of the city-inhabitants. You will find yourſelves in them again and again ranked and placed,

placed, according to your different ſpiritual eſtates, and the various caſes and conditions of your ſouls, and wonderful diſcoveries made to yourſelves of yourſelves, that I ſomething doubt, if there be ſo much as one ſoul amongſt the ſeveral thouſands that are in Glaſgow, but will find itſelf, by the reading of theſe ſermons, ſpoken to, ſuitably to its ſtate and caſe, as if he had been particularly acquainted with the perſon, and his ſpiritual condition (as indeed he made it a conſiderable part of his work, as the obſerving reader will quickly and eaſily perceive, to be acquainted very thoroughly with the ſoul-ſtate and condition of ſuch at leaſt of the inhabitants as were more immediately under his own inſpection and charge) and, as if he had ſpoken to the perſon by name. O! how inexcuſable will ſuch of you be, as had your lot caſt to live under the miniſtry of ſuch *an able miniſter of the New Teſtament*, of ſuch *a ſcribe*, very much *inſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, who as a good houſholder, knew well how to bring out of his treaſure, things new and old*, Matt. xiii. 52. if your were not bettered and and made to profit thereby? God and angels, and your own conſciences, will witneſs, how often and how urgently the Lord Jeſus called to you by him, and ye would not hear. And how inexcuſable will ye alſo be, that ſhall diſdain or neglect to read *theſe ſermons* (as I hope none of you will) that were ſometime preached in that place by that faithful ſervant of Chriſt, who was your own miniſter, which layeth ſome peculiar obligation on you, beyond others, to read them; or if ye ſhall read them, and make no conſcience to improve them to your ſoul's edification and advantage, which contain more genuine, pure, ſincere, ſolid, and ſubſtantial goſpel than many thouſands have heard, it may be, in an age, though hearing preaching much all the while; even ſo much, that if any of you ſhould be providentially deprived of the liberty of hearing the goſpel any more preached,

ed, or ſhould have acceſs to read no other ſermons or comments on the ſcriptures, theſe ſermons, through God's bleſſing, will abundantly ſtore and inrich you in the knowledge of the *uncontrovertably great myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. and *according to the ſcriptures make you wiſe unto ſalvation through faith, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. much inſiſted on in them? I would therefore humbly adviſe (wherein I hope ye will not miſtake me, as if, by this advice, I were deſigning ſome advantage to myſelf, for indeed, I am not at all that way concerned in the ſale of them) that every one of you that can read, and is eaſily able to do it, would buy a copy of theſe ſermons; at leaſt, that every family that is able, wherein there is any that can read, would purchaſe one of them. I nothing doubt, but ye will think that little money very well beſtowed, and will find your old miniſter, deſirable Durham, delightful company to diſcourſe with you by his ſermons, now when he is dead, and you can ſee his face, and hear him ſpeak to you by *voice* no more. The voice of Chriſt by him, was, I know, very ſweet to many that are now aſleep, and to ſome of you yet alive; who, I do not doubt, never allow yourſelves, to expect with confidence and comfort to look the Lord Jeſus in the face, but as ſeriouſly and ſincerely ye make it your buſineſs, to be found in his righteouſneſs, ſo much cleared and commended to you, and in the ſtudy of holineſs in all manner of converſation, ſo powerfully preſſed upon you here.

That theſe ſweet and ſavoury goſpel-ſermons may come to you all, and more particularly to you, my dear friends at Glaſgow, *with the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the goſpel* (Rom. xv. 29.) even of *the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are ſanctified* (Acts xx. 32.) is the ſerious deſire of,

Your ſervant in the goſpel,

J. C.

SERMON I.

Isaiah LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

WE hope it is not needful to inſiſt on opening the ſcope of this chapter, or in clearing to you of whom the prophet ſpeaks: It was once queſtioned by the Eunuch, Acts viii. 32. when he was reading this chapter, *Of whom doth the prophet ſpeak this, of himſelf, or of ſome other man?* And it was ſo clearly anſwered by Philip, who, from theſe words, began and preached Jeſus Chriſt to him, that there needs be no doubt of it now: To Chriſtians theſe two things may put it out of queſtion, that Jeſus Chriſt and the ſubſtance of the goſpel are abridged and ſummed up here. 1. If we compare the letter of this chapter with what is in the four evangeliſts, we ſhall ſee it ſo fully, and often ſo literally, explained of Chriſt, that if any do but read this chapter, and compare it with them, they will find the evangeliſts to be commentators on it, and ſetting it out more fully. 2. That there is no ſcripture in the Old Teſtament ſo often, and ſo convincingly, applied to Chriſt as this;

there being ſcarce one verſe, at leaſt not many, but is by the evangeliſts or apoſtles explained as a propheſy of Chriſt.

If we look then to the words of this chapter, they take in the ſum and ſubſtance of the goſpel, in theſe two points. 1. The right deſcription and manifeſtation of Jeſus Chriſt; and, 2. The unfolding and opening of the covenant of redemption. Where theſe two are, there the ſum of the goſpel is; but theſe two are here, therefore the ſum of the goſpel is here. For Jeſus Chriſt is deſcribed, 1. In his perſon and natures: as God, being eternal; as man, being under ſufferings. 2. In all his offices: as a prieſt, offering up himſelf a ſacrifice to ſatisfy juſtice; as a prophet, uttering his knowledge to the juſtifying of many thereby; and as a king, dividing the ſpoil with the ſtrong. 3. In his humiliation, in the cauſe of it, in the end of it, in the ſubject of it, and in the nature and riſe of all, God's good pleaſure. And, 4. In his exaltation, and the bleſſed iſſue promiſed him of all his ſufferings and and humiliations.

2. The covenant of redemption is here deſcribed and ſet forth. 1. In the particular parties of it, God and the Mediator. 2. As to the matter about which it was, the ſeed that was given to Chriſt, and all whoſe iniquities fell on him. 3. As to the mutual engagements on both ſides, the Son undertaking to make his ſoul an offering for ſin, and the Father promiſing that the efficacy of that his ſatisfaction, ſhall be imputed and applied for the juſtification of ſinners, and the terms on which, or the way how this imputation and application is brought about, to wit, *By his knowledge;* all are clearly held forth here.

This is only a touch of the excellency of this ſcripture, and of the materials (to ſay ſo) in it, as comprehending the ſubſtance and marrow of the goſpel; we ſhall not be particular in dividing the chapter, conſidering that theſe things we have hinted at, are interwoven in it.

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The firſt verſe is a ſhort introduction, leading us to what follows. The prophet had in the former chapter been ſpeaking of Chriſt as God's ſervant, that ſhould be extolled and made very high, and before he proceeds more particularly to unfold this myſtery of the goſpel, he cries out, by way of regret, *Who hath believed our report?* Alas! (would he ſay) for as good news as we have to carry, few will believe it; ſuch is mens unconcernedneſs, yea, malice and obſtinacy, that they reject it. *And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* This points at the neceſſity of the power of God to accompany preaching, and even the moſt lively ordinances, to make them effectual: How few are they, that the power of God captivates to the obedience of this truth?

For the firſt part of this verſe, *Who hath believed our report?* To open it a little, take theſe four or five conſiderations before we come to the doctrines.

Conſider, 1. The matter of this report in reference to its ſcope: It is not every report, but a report of Chriſt, and of the covenant of redemption and of grace. In the original it is, Who hath believed *our hearing* actively; that is, that which we have propoſed to be heard; and the word is turned *tidings*, Dan. xi. 44. and *rumour*, Jer. li. 46. It is the tidings and rumour of a ſuffering Mediator, interpoſing himſelf betwixt God and ſinners; and, it may be, *hearing* is mentioned to point out the confidence which the prophet had in reporting this news; he firſt heard it from God, and in that was paſſive; then actively propoſed it to the people, to be heard by them. 2. Conſider that the prophet ſpeaks of this report, not as in his own perſon only, but as in the perſon of all that ever preached, or ſhall preach this goſpel; therefore this report is not peculiar to Iſaiah, but it is *our report;* the report of the prophets before, and of thoſe after him, and of the apoſtles and miniſters of the goſpel. 3. Conſider that Iſaiah ſpeaks of this report, not only

in reſpect of what he met with in his own time, but as foreſeeing what would be the carriage of people in reference to it in after-times; therefore John xii. 38. and Rom. x. 16. this ſame place is alledged to give a reaſon of the Jews unbelief; becauſe Iſaiah foretold it long before. 4. Conſider, that when he complains of the want of faith to the report and tidings of the goſpel, it is not of the want of hiſtorical faith, as if the people would not give Chriſt a hearing at all, but of the want of ſaving faith; therefore John xii. 37, 38. it is ſaid, *Though he had done many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him;* and this prophetic ſcripture is ſubjoined as the reaſon of it, *That the ſaying of Iſaiahs might be fulfilled, who ſaid, Lord, who hath believed our report?* Applying the *believing* ſpoken of here, to that ſaving faith whereby people believe and reſt upon Jeſus Chriſt. 5. Conſider, that tho' there be no expreſs party named to whom the prophet complains, yet, no doubt, it is to God; therefore, John xii. 38. and Rom. x. 16. when this ſcripture is cited, it is ſaid, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* So it is the prophet's complaint of the little fruit he himſelf had, and that the miniſters of the goſpel ſhould have in preaching the goſpel, regreting and complaining of it to God, as a grievous matter, that it ſhould come to ſo many, and ſo few ſhould get good of it, ſo few ſhould be brought to believe, and to be ſaved by it.

Though theſe words be few, yet they have four great points in them; to which we ſhall reduce them, and ſpeak more clearly of them. 1. That the great ſubject of preaching, and the preacher's great errand is, to report concerning Jeſus Chriſt, to bring tidings concerning him. 2. That the great duty of hearers (implied) is, to believe this report; and by virtue of it, to be brought to reſt and rely on Jeſus Chriſt. 3. That the great, though the ordinary ſin of the generality of the hearers of the goſpel, is unbelief, *Who hath*

hath believed? that is, It is few that have believed; it is a rare thing to see a believer of this report. 4. That the great complaint, burden, and grief of an honest minister of the gospel, is this, That his message is not accepted; that Christ is not received, believed in, and rested on: This is the great challenge ministers have against the generality of people, and the ground of their complaint to God, That whatever they report concerning Christ, he is not welcomed, his kingdom does not flourish.

That we may speak to the first, considering the words with respect to the scope, we shall draw five or six doctrines from them: The first whereof is more general, That the discovery of Christ Jesus, and the making him known, is the greatest news, the gladest tidings, and the most excellent report, that ever came, or can come to a people: there is no such thing can be told them, no such tidings can they hear. This is the report that the prophet speaks of by way of eminency; a report above, and beyond all other reports. This is news worthy to be carried by angels; *Behold*, saith one of them, Luke ii. 20. *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people:* And what are these tidings so prefaced with a *behold? For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* These are the good tidings, That Jesus Christ is come, and that he is the Saviour by office. We shall not insist on this; only, 1. We find a brief view of this subject in the following words; which hold forth clearly Christ, God and man in one person, completely qualified, and excellently furnished for his offices. 2. It is also clear, if we look to the excellent effects that follow his being so furnished; as, his satisfying justice, his setting captives free, his triumphing over principalities and powers, his destroying the works of the devil, &c. there cannot be more excellent works or effects spoken of. 3. It is clear, if we look to him from

from whom this report comes, and in whose breast this news bred, (if we may speak so) it is the result of the counsel of the Godhead; and therefore, as the report here is made in the Lord's name, so he is complained to, when it is not received at the prophet's hand. And, 4. It is clear, if we look to the mysteriousness of this news, angels could never have conceived it, had not this report come; these things shew, that it is great, glorious and good news, glad tidings, as it is in the end of the former chapter, *That which hath not been told them shall they see, and that which they have not heard shall they consider.*

The first *use* is, To draw our hearts to love the gospel, and to raise our estimation of it. Peoples ears are itching after novelties, and ye are much grown out of conceit with this news; but is there in any news such an advantage as in this? when God sends news to men, it must be great news; and such, indeed, is this.

Use 2. Therefore be afraid to entertain a loathing of the plain substantial truths of the gospel: if ye had never heard them before, there would probably be some Athenian itching to hear and speak of them; but they should not be the less valued, that they are often heard and spoke of.

Use 3. Therefore think more highly of the gospel, seeing it contains the substance of this good news and glad tidings; and value gospel-ordinances the more, whereby these good tidings are so often published and made plain to you.

2. More particularly *observe*, That Jesus Christ, and what concerns him, the glad and good news of a Saviour, and the reporting of it, is the very proper work of a minister, and the great subject of his preaching; his proper work is to make him known: or take it thus, Christ is the natural subject on which all preaching should run. This is the report the prophet speaks of here; and, in effect, it was so to John and the

the other apoſtles, and ſhould be ſo to all miniſters; Chriſt Jeſus, and what concerns him, in his perſon, natures and offices; to know, and make him known to be God and man; to make him known in his offices, to be prieſt, prophet, and king; to be a prieſt, in his ſuffering and ſatisfying juſtice; to be a prophet, in revealing the will of God; to be a king, for ſubduing our luſts and corruptions; and to know, and make him known, in the way by which ſinners, both preachers and hearers, may come to have him to be theirs, as follows in this chapter. This, this is the ſubject of all preaching; and all preaching ſhould be levelled at this mark. Paul is, 1 Cor. ii. 2. peremptory in this, *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified:* As if he had ſaid, I will meddle with no other thing, but betake myſelf to this; not only will he forbear to meddle with civil employments, but he will lay aſide his learning, eloquence and human wiſdom, and make the preaching of Chriſt crucified his great work and ſtudy. The reaſon of this is, Becauſe Chriſt ſtands in a fourfold relation to preaching. 1. He is the text, to ſay ſo, of ſermons: all preaching is to explain him, Acts x. 43. *To him give all the prophets witneſs*; and ſo do the four evangeliſts, and the apoſtolic epiſtles, which are as ſo many ſermons of him; and that preaching which ſtands not in relation to him, is beſide the text. Mark 2. He is holden out as the foundation and ground-work of preaching; ſo that a ſermon without him, wants a foundation, and is like the building of a caſtle in the air, 1 Cor. iii. 10.—*I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let every man take heed how he buildeth, for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt;* importing, that all preaching ſhould be ſquared to, and made to agree with this foundation-ſtone. 3. He ſtands as the great end of preaching, not only that hearers may have him known to their judgements,

judgements, but may have him higheſt in their hearts and affections, 2 Cor. iii. 4. *We preach not ourſelves*, that is, we not only do not preach ourſelves as the ſubject, but we preach not ourſelves as the end of our preaching; our deſign is not to be great, or much eſteemed, but our end in preaching is to make Chriſt great. 4. He ſtands, in relation to preaching, as he is the power and life of it; without whom, no preaching can be effectual, no ſoul can be captivated and brought in to him. Hence, 1 Cor. i. 23. the apoſtle ſaith, *We preach Chriſt crucified, to the Jews a ſtumbling-block*, they cannot abide to hear him; *and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but to them that are ſaved, the power of God, and the wiſdom of God.*

The firſt *uſes* are for miniſters, which we ſhall not now inſiſt on; only, 1. Were Chriſt more the ſubject and ſubſtance of our report, were we more diligent in diſplaying his excellencies, it is like it might go better with us. 2. There is great need of being wary, that the report we make of him ſuit well with the foundation. And, 3. The neglect of this may be the cauſe of much unſucceſsful preaching, becauſe Chriſt is not ſo preached, as the ſubject matter and end of preaching requires; many truths are, alas! ſpoke without reſpect to this end, or but with very little reſpect to it.

Particular *uſes* for you that are hearers are theſe; 1. If this be the great ſubject of miniſters preaching, and that which ye ſhould hear moſt gladly; and if this be moſt profitable for you, I ſhall be particular in ſome few directions to you, which will be as ſo many branches of the uſe. And firſt, Of all the truths that people ought to welcome and ſtudy, they ſhould welcome and ſtudy thoſe that moſt concern Chriſt and the covenant of grace, as foundation-truths, and ſeek to have them backed by the ſpirit. We are afraid there is a fault among Chriſtians, that moſt plain and ſubſtantial truths are not ſo much regarded; but ſome things

things that may further them in knowledge, or tickle their affections, or answer a case, are almost only sought after. These things, it is true, are good; but if the plain and substantial truths of the gospel were more studied and made use of, they have in them what would answer all cases. It is much to be lamented, when people are more taken up with notions and speculations, than with these soul-saving truths; as, that Christ was born; that he was a true man; that he was, and is king, priest, and prophet of his church, &c. and that other things are heard with more greediness: But, if these be the great subject of ministers preaching, it should be your great study to know Christ, in his person, natures, offices and covenant; what he is to you, and what is your duty to him, and how you should walk in him, and with him. This was Paul's aim; *I count* (saith he) *all things loss and dung, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings*, &c. Phil. iii. 8, 9, 10. As if he would say, It is my design, not only to make him known, but to know him myself. There is little faith in Christ, and distinctness in making use of his offices; people take but little pains to know these things; therefore, on the one side, let me exhort you to make this more the subject of your enquiry; and on the other side, take it for a reproof, that there is such a readiness to snuff when plain truths are insisted on, or when they are not followed in some uncouth or strange way, which shews, that we are exceeding unthankful to God for giving us the best things to speak, hear, and think of.

2. Think highly of the preaching of Christ; and to have ministers to preach him. He is the best news; and God hath sent ministers on this errand, to make it known to you. Had he sent them to tell you all the secret things to come that are in God's purpose, and all the hidden works of nature, it had

not been comparable to this news. What would ye have been? O what would fabbath-days and week-days, your lying down and rifing up, your living and dying been, if this news had not been fent? Ye muft have had a finful and fad life, and a moft comfortlefs and terrible death: therefore reckon this gofpel a thing of more worth than ye do; and count their feet beautiful on the mountains, that bring thefe news and glad tidings, as it is, Ifa. lii. The good report of making peace betwixt God and finners fhould be much thought of and prized, and counted a greater favour than we ufe to reckon it. 3. By this ye may know who thrives and profits beft under the gofpel, even thofe that learn moft of Chrift, which confifts not in telling over words. But, 1. In actual improving of him, as it is Eph. iii. 20. *Ye have not fo learned Chrift*, but fo as to improve what is in him. 2. In an experimental feeling thefe effects in us, that are mentioned to come by Chrift; which is what the apoftle means, Phil. iii. 10. *That I may know him, and the power of his refurrection, and the fellowfhip of his fufferings; that I may be conformable to his death.* I am afraid, that of the many that hear this gofpel, there are but few that know Chrift this way. But if he be the great thing that fhould be preached by us, and that ye fhould learn, 1. What is the reafon that fo many fhould be ignorant of him, that the moft part look rather like Turks and Pagans than like Chriftians? God help us, what fhall we fay of the condition of moft part of people, when the preaching of the gofpel has not gained fo much ground on us, as to make us know Chrift, in his perfon, natures and offices, our need of him, and the ufe we fhould make of him? But, 2. If we try how the knowledge of him is improved, it is to be feared there be but very few that know him in this refpect. Do not many men live as if they had never heard of them. Though they hear that pardon of fin is to be had through him, and

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that virtue to ſubdue ſin muſt flow from him, yet they live as if no ſuch thing were in him. If, beſides the evidences that are in your practice, ſuch a queſtion were put to your conſciences, this would be found to be a ſad truth. And, 3. If we will yet try further, what experience people have of Chriſt; what virtue they find flowing from his reſurrection; what fellowſhip there is in his ſufferings; what conformity to his death; what benefit redounds to them from his offices of king, prieſt and prophet, to the ſubduing of ſin, and quickening to holy duties; what benefit of fruit from his death; alas! no more of this is to be found with moſt, than if he had never died: what profit or real influence, as to any ſpiritual change, do any conſiderable number find in themſelves: and think ye all theſe things to be but words? they know him not, that feel not ſomething of the efficacy of his death and reſurrection in themſelves.

3. *Obſerve*, That the report concerning Chriſt, is the main ſubject and errand that has been, and is, and will be common to all the miniſters of the goſpel, to the end of the world. It is *our report;* it was the report of all the prophets, Acts x. 43. *To him bear all the prophets witneſs, That through his name, whoſoever believeth on him, ſhould have remiſſion of ſins.* They all agree, and give a joint teſtimony in theſe things that follow. 1. In one ſubject, Chriſt, and the ſame things concerning him; as, that the pardon of ſin is to be obtained in him, and through faith in him, and no other way, *&c.* 2. In one commiſſion: they have all one commiſſion, though they be not all equal. All are not apoſtles, yet all are ambaſſadors. There is the ſame authority for us to report, and you to receive the goſpel, as if Iſaiah or Paul were preaching. The authority depends on the commiſſion, and not on the perſons of men who carry it. 3. In one common end which they all have, and in one common object they are ſent to preach to. 4. In this, that

they all hold of one common master, being gifts of one and the same Mediator, Eph. iv. *When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive; and gave gifts to men, to some apostles*, &c.

The first *use* is, To teach you not to think the less of the testimony, or matter testified, because of those that testify it to you. If Isaiah or Paul were testifying to you, ye would get no other tidings, though their life and way would be of another sort and stamp than ours are. Alas! for the most part, we are warranted, as well as they, to make Christ known to you: therefore take heed of rejecting the testimony of this Christ that we bear witness unto; it is the same Christ that the law and the prophets bear witness to; *There is not another name given under heaven, whereby a sinner can be saved:* It is through him, that whosoever believes on him, may receive remission of sins. In this ye have not only us, but the prophets and apostles to deal with, yea, Jesus Christ, and God himself; and the rejecting of us, will be found to be the rejecting of them. It is the same testimony for the matter that it was in Isaiah's time; and therefore, tremble and fear all ye that slight the gospel. Ye have not us for your party; but all the prophets, and Isaiah among the rest, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath said, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.* There will be many aggravations of the guilt of an unbeliever, and this will be a main one, even the testimony of all the prophets that concur in this truth which they have rejected. Take heed to this all ye Atheists, that know not what it is to own your sins; and all ye hypocrites, that coin and counterfeit a religion of your own; and all ye legalists, that lean to your own righteousness. What will ye say, when it shall be found that ye have rejected all these testimonies? Ye must either say, ye reckoned them false witnesses, which ye will not dare to say; or that ye accounted them true, and yet would not receive

receive their teſtimony: and the beſt of theſe will be found bad enough; for if ye counted them true, why did ye not believe them? this will be a very pungent dilemma.

Uſe 2. For comfort to poor believers. They have good ground to receive and reſt upon Jeſus Chriſt. There is never a prophet, apoſtle, or preacher of the goſpel, but he hath ſealed this truth concerning Chriſt. What needs any ſinner be fearful to cloſe with him? Will ye give credit to the teſtimony of Iſaiah, and of Peter, Acts x. 43. and of the reſt of the prophets and apoſtles? then receive their reports; and be you yourſelves among the number of believers, that their teſtimony may be reſted on. We are perſuaded, there is one of two things that will follow on this doctrine; either a ſtrong encouragement to, and confirmation of believing, and reſting on Jeſus Chriſt for pardon of ſin; or a great ground of aggravation of, and expoſtulation with you for your guilt, who care not whether ye receive this report or not. We ſhall ſay no more now, but God bleſs this to you.

SERMON II.

Isaiah LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

THE prophet Iſaiah is very ſolicitous about the fruit of his preaching, when he preached concerning

cerning Chriſt: As, indeed, it is not enough for miniſters to preach, and for people to hear, except ſome fruit follows. And now, when he has been much in preaching, and looks to others that have been alſo much in that work, he ſadly regrets the little fruit it had, and would have among them, to whom Chriſt was and ſhould be ſpoken of. A thing, that in the entry ſhould put us to be ſerious, leſt this complaint of Iſaiah ſtand on record againſt us; ſeeing he complains of the hearers of the goſpel, not only in his own time, but in ours alſo.

We told you there were four things in this firſt part of the verſe. 1. The great errand that miniſters have to people: It is to report concerning Chriſt. And beſides what we obſerved from this head before, looking ſtill to the ſcope, we ſhall obſerve further:

1. The end that miniſters ſhould have before them in preaching Chriſt and the goſpel is, That the hearers of it may be gained to Jeſus Chriſt by hearing, ſo as they may be brought to believe on him: It is, in a word, to gain them to ſaving faith in Chriſt.

It is implied, That Jeſus Chriſt only is to be propoſed as the object of faith, to be reſted on by the hearers of the goſpel; and that he is the only ground of their peace. There is no name that can be mentioned for the ſalvation of ſouls, but this name only; and there is no other goſpel can be propoſed, but that which holdeth him out to the people.

3. *Obſerve*, (Which is much the ſame with the former obſervation, but I would ſpeak a little more particularly to it.) That by preaching the goſpel, Jeſus Chriſt is laid before the hearers as the object of their faith, and propoſed to be believed in by them, elſe there would be no ground of this complaint againſt them: But wherever this goſpel is preached, there Chriſt is laid, as it were, at the heart or door of every ſoul that hears it, to be believed and reſted on. This is the great errand of the goſpel, To propoſe to people

people Jesus Christ as the object and ground of faith, and to represent him as the only one to be rested on for that very end. When the apostle speaks, Rom. x. 8. of the doctrine of faith, he saith, *It is not now, Who shall ascend into heaven? nor, Who shall descend into the deep? But the word is near thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart.* What word is that? *The word of faith which we preach.* Now, saith he, Christ, by the preaching of the gospel, is brought so near us, that he is brought even to our hearts and mouths; so near, that (if we may so speak) people have no more to do but to stoop and take him up, or rest themselves entirely on him; yea it bringeth him into their very heart, that they have no more to do but to bring up their heart to consent to close the bargain, and with the mouth to make confession of it. And these words are the more considerable, because they are borrowed from Deut. xxx. where Moses is setting death and life before the people, and bidding them chuse: though he would seem to speak of the law; yet, if we consider the scope we shall find him speaking of Jesus Christ, holden forth to that people under ceremonial ordinances, and shewing them that there was life to be had in him that way; and, according to God's intent, they had life and death put in their choice.

I know there are two things necessary to the acting and exercising of faith. The first is objective; when the object or ground is proposed in the preaching of the gospel. The second is subjective; when there is an inward, spiritual, and powerful quickening and framing of the heart to lay hold on, and make use of the object and offer. It is true, that all to whom the offer cometh are not quickened; but the doctrine saith, That to all to whom the gospel cometh, Christ is proposed, to be believed on by them, and brought near unto them: so that we may say, as Christ said to his hearers, *The kingdom of God is come near unto you.* Both Christ and John brought and laid the kingdom

dom of heaven to the Jews; and it is laid as near to you in the preached gospel. This is it then that the doctrine says, 1. That the gospel holdeth forth Christ as a sufficient ground of faith to rest upon. And, 2. With a sufficient warrant to those who hear it, to make use of him, according to the terms on which he is offered. And, 3. It brings him so expressingly home, as he is laid to the doors and hearts of sinners who hear the gospel; that whoever hath the offer, he must necessarily either believe in, and receive Christ, or reject him, and the report represented of him in the gospel.

I shall, *First*, a little confirm this doctrine; and then, *Secondly*, make use of it.

First, I shall confirm it from these grounds. 1. From the plain offers which the Lord makes in his word, and from the warrant he gives his ministers to make the same offers. It is their commission to pray them to whom they are sent, to be reconciled: to tell them, *That God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to himself*, as in 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. and, in Christ's stead, to request them to embrace the offer of reconciliation: To tell them that Christ died for those sinners that will embrace him, and that he will impute his righteousness unto them: and chap. vi. 1. *We beseech you* (saith he) *that ye receive not this grace in vain*; which is not meant of saving grace, but of the gracious offer of grace and reconciliation through him. This is ministers work, to pray people not to be idle hearers of this gospel; *For* (saith he) *I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in a day of salvation have I succoured thee: Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* The force of the argument is this, If ye will make this gospel welcome, ye may get a hearing; for now is the day of salvation, therefore do not neglect it. So Psalm lxxxi. 10, 11. (where God makes the offer of himself largely) *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* The offer is of himself,

ſelf, as the words following make clear; *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me;* for they that refuſe his word, refuſe himſelf. And hence, Iſa. lxv. 1. he ſaith, *I am found of them that ſought me not; I ſaid, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name:* And to the Jews, *I have ſtretched out my hands all day long to a rebellious people.* 2. We may clear and confirm it from theſe ſimilitudes; by which the offer of this goſpel is as it were, brought to the doors of people. And there are ſeveral ſimilitudes made uſe of to this purpoſe; I ſhall name but four. 1. It is ſet down under the expreſſion of wooing; as, 2 Cor. xi. 2. *I have eſpouſed you as a chaſte virgin to Chriſt.* This is ordinary, and ſuppoſeth a marriage; and a bridegroom, that is by his friends wooing and ſuiting in marriage: So that (as we ſhew) where ever the call of the goſpel comes, it is a beſpeaking of ſouls to him; as, Cant. viii. *What ſhall we do for our ſiſter in the day that ſhe ſhall be ſpoken for?* 2. It is ſet forth under the expreſſion of inviting to a feaſt; and hearers of the goſpel are called to come to Chriſt as ſtrangers, or gueſts are called to come to a wedding-feaſt; Mat. xxii. 2, 3, 4. *All things are ready, come to the wedding,* &c. Thus the goſpel calleth not to an empty houſe that wants meat, but to a banqueting-houſe where Chriſt is made ready as the cheer, and there wants no more but feaſting on him. So it is repreſented under the ſimilitude of eating and drinking, John vi. 27. *He that eats me, even he ſhall live by me.* 3. It is mentioned often under the expreſſion or ſimilitude of a market, where all the wares are laid forth on the ſtands, Iſa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſts come to the waters,* &c. And leſt it ſhould be ſaid, or thought, that the proclamation is only to the thirſty, and to ſuch as are ſo and ſo qualified, ye may look to what followeth, *Let him that hath no money come; yea, come buy without money, and without price;* and to the offer that is made to thoſe of

Laodicea, Rev. iii. who, in appearance, were a hypocritical and formal people, yet to them the counsel and call comes forth, *Come buy of me eye-salve, and gold tried in the fire*, &c. It says, the wares are even in their offer, or offered to them. 4. It is expressed under the similitude of a standing and knocking at a door, because the gospel brings Christ a knocking and calling hard at sinners door, Rev. iii. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* So Cant. v. 2. By the sleepy bride it is said, *It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh.* And Psalm xxiv. last four verses, it is cried out, *Lift up your heads ye gates, and be lift up ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in:* Which is an earnest invitation to make way for Christ Jesus, wanting nothing but an entry into the heart; whereby we may see how near Christ comes in the gospel, and is laid to our hand. 3. We may confirm it from the nature of faith, and of the obedience that is required to be given to the command of believing. Where ever this gospel comes, it tieth and obligeth all the hearers to believe on Christ; that is, to receive and welcome him: and there could be no receiving of him, if he were not making an offer of himself. Thus it is said, John i. 11, 12. *He came unto his own, but his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.* He came to both, these who received him, and to these who received him not; but he gave to believers only this privilege of sonship. If we look to all the names of faith, as, *Coming to Christ, eating and drinking of him, receiving of him, resting on him, &c.* they all suppose that Christ is near to be catched hold of, and within terms of speaking and meeting, to people that hear the gospel. 4. It may be confirmed from the many sad complaints that the Lord makes for not receiving him, and not believing his word,

and

and from the dreadful deſcriptions, by which he holds out the ſin of unbelief; all which will make out this, That God lays Chriſt at the door of ſinners in his word. Hence, John v. 40. our Lord ſays, *Ye will not come unto me, that ye may get life:* And Mat. xxxiii. at the cloſe, *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thee, and ye would not.* This was what did aggravate their ſin, That he would, and they would not. So Pſalm lxxxi. *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me.* And Luke vii. it is ſaid, the ſcribes and the Phariſees *rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves.* And Acts xiii. 54. when the Jews rejected Chriſt, it is ſaid, *They judged themſelves unworthy of everlaſting life;* and therefore the apoſtles ſay, that they will *leave them, and turn to the Gentiles.* 5. We may confirm it from this, That in reſpect of the goſpel, and offer made in it, Chriſt comes alike near to all that hear it; for if he be near to ſome, then he is near to all, I mean in regard of an objective nearneſs, there is the ſame warrant to ſpeak and make the offer to all, before there be ſome diſcovery made for qualifying the doctrine to ſome. It is true, there is a difference in reſpect of the power that accompanies the goſpel; but as it layeth out the offer of Chriſt, and life thro' him, it comes alike near to all the hearers of it: invitation comes to all, and in the ſame terms, to them that refuſe, as well as to them that receive him, the ſame goſpel is preached to both. A ſixth confirmation is from the nature of God's adminiſtration of his external covenant, which is ſealed in baptiſm to both; not one covenant to one, and another covenant to another, but the ſame covenant on condition of believing to both. Behold then, in the preaching of this goſpel, that Chriſt comes near you, even to your door, in reſpect of the mediate ordinances; as near as he did to Abraham and David; although God had his extraordinary ways of manifeſting himſelf to them,

not common to others; yea, this day the gospel is more clear objectively to you, than it was to Abraham, who rejoiced to see Christ's day afar off, when it was veiled; yea, the gospel is as clearly preached to you, as those who are now before the throne of God had it preached to them, as to the matter of it, though we will make no equality as to the manner of it.

Use 1. Advert to this, when ye come to hear the gospel preached, and think how you are in meeting terms with God, and how near Christ comes unto you: the word of faith lays him so near, that ye have no more to do but to receive the offer of him, to believe in and close with him, and come as living stones to be built upon him as a sure foundation.

But it will be asked, How comes this gospel so near? how does it bring Christ so near to sinners? *Answer;* In these five steps: 1. As it makes the report of Christ, and brings the tidings of such things; as, that he is born, and that he hath suffered, and for such an end, and that we may partake of the benefit of them on such terms: It makes the proclamation by way of narrative; and tells what he did, what good may be got of him, and how we may come by it. 2. As it brings an offer of these good things on the terms on which they are to be got: So that it never tells that Christ is come, but it says also here is life to be got by him for him for you, if ye will take the way proposed to come by it. Therefore when the proclamation comes forth, *That all things are ready;* the next word is, *Come to the wedding:* And when in the one word he says, *I stand at the door and knock;* at the next he says, *If any man will open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me:* And when, Isa. xxviii. it is said, He *is a precious corner-stone, a tried foundation-stone laid in Zion;* the next word is, *He that believes on him shall not make haste;* or, as the apostle hath it, *shall not be ashamed or confounded.* This makes the

the gospel glad tidings, because it comes always with an offer of Christ, and of life in him. 3. When the offer is made, and the precious wares are exposed to sale in this proclaimed fair of grace, a command comes out, chuse life, come buy the wares, believe, receive the offer, as is clear in all the places we named before: It leaves not people indifferent to receive or not, but chargeth them as they would be obedient to a command to receive him, 1 John xxiii. 3. *This is his commandment, That ye should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* This is the great gospel command; and ministers have not only the telling of this news, and warrant to make the offer, but a commission to command people to receive it, and therefore the neglecting and slighting of the offer is a sin opposite to the command. 4. It not only makes the offer, and backs the offer with a command to embrace it, but it sweetens the command with many gracious promises knit to it, as Isa. lv. *Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David:* And whenever the command of believing come out, it is always with a promise; as Paul deals with the jaylor, Acts xvi. *Believe and thou shalt be saved:* And Mark xvi. towards the close, the Lord says, *They that believe shall be saved,* to encourage to faith in him. 5. It presses the offer, and commands the embracing of it with a promise and with a threatning; for the offer is not conditional, but alternative, Mark xvi. *If ye believe not, ye shall be damned:* So Deut. xxx. death and life are proposed, and they are bid chuse. If the gospel be not effectual in its commands and promises, it will be effectual in its threatnings: The word of God will triumph one way or the other, and not return to him void, as is very clear, Isa. lv. 11. and 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. It triumphs in some while they are brought by the promise to give obedience to the command of believing, and to them it becomes the

the favour of life unto life: and to others it triumphs as to the execution of the threatning on them for their unbelief, and to them it becomes the favour of death unto death. In a word, Chriſt Jeſus comes ſo near people in this goſpel, that he muſt either be choſen, and life with him, or refuſed, to the deſtruction and death of the refuſer. Ye have the ſame Chriſt, the ſame word, the ſame covenant, the ſame obligation to believe, propoſed to you, that believers from the beginning of the world had, and another ye will not get; and what more can the goſpel do to bring Chriſt near to you? When it brings him ſo near, that ye have him in your offer, and the authority of God and his promiſes interpoſed, to perſuade you to accept the offer; and threatnings added, to terrify you, that if ye accept it not, ye ſhall periſh: In which reſpect we may ſay as the prophet Iſaiah doth, chap. v. *What could God do more to his vineyard which he hath not done?* as to the holding forth of the object of faith, Jeſus Chriſt, to be reſted on by you.

But ſome, it may be, will object here, 1. If there comes not life and power with the offer, it will not do the turn: we cannot believe, nor receive the offer. *Anſw.* Whoſe fault is it that ye want ability? It is not God's fault; ye have a ſure ground to believe: his word is a warrant good enough; the promiſes are free enough; the motives ſweet enough: the great fault is a heart of unbelief in you, that ye will not believe in Chriſt, nor open to him when he is brought to your door. I doubt, yea, I put it out of doubt, when all that ever heard the goſpel ſhall ſtand before the throne, that there will not be one found that ſhall dare to make this excuſe, that they were not able to receive Chriſt: The goſpel brings Chriſt ſo near them, that they muſt either ſay yea or nay: It is not ſo much I cannot, as I will not believe; and that will be found a wilful and malicious refuſal.

2. It may be objected, But how can this goſpel come

come to all alike, seeing it cannot be that those that never get good of the gospel have it as near to them, as these that gets the saving fruit of it? *Answ.* Not to speak of God's purpose, or what he intends to make of it, nor of the power and fruit that accompanies it to some, and not to all; it is certain the gospel and Christ in its offer comes alike near to all that hear it: It objectively reveals the same glad tidings to all, with the conditional offer of life, and with the same command and encouragement, and certification in threatnings as well as promises. In these respects Christ is brought alike near to all; and when God comes to reckon, he will let sinners know in that day that the gospel came to their door, and was refused; yea it comes, and where it comes will take hold of some to pluck them out of the snare, and be ground of faith to them; and to others it will be a ground of challenge, and so the savour of death unto death: For though it takes not effect as to its promises in all, nor in its threatnings to all; yet, as to either death or life, it will take effect in every one; so as life be refused, death comes in the room of it.

But it may be asked, Why will God have Christ in the offer of the gospel brought so near the hearers of it? *Answ.* 1. Because it serves to commend the grace and love of God in Christ Jesus, when the invitation is so large that it is to all; it speaks out the royalty of the feast, upon which ground, 2 Cor. vi. 1. it is called *grace*, the offer is so large and wide. 2. Because it serves for warranting and confirming the elect in the receiving of this offer; for none of the elect could receive him, if he were not even laid at their door. It is this which gives us warrant to receive that which God offers. It is not because we are elected or beloved of God before time, or because he purposed to do us good, that we believe; these are not grounds of faith, being God's secret will: But we believe, because God calleth and maketh the offer, inviteth

viteth and promiſeth, knowing that he is faithful, and we may truſt in him. Hence David ſays, *I will never forget thy word*, and *in God will I praiſe his word;* for the word in its offer ſpeaks alike to all, and to none particularly. Indeed when it comes to the application of promiſes for conſolation, that is to be made according to the qualifications in the perſons, but the offer is to all. 3. Becauſe by this means the Lord hath the fairer acceſs to found his quarrel and controverſy againſt unbelievers, and to make their ditty and doom the clearer in the day of the Lord, when it is found that they never received the offer; *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me; therefore I gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels.* And this is an approbation given to juſtice here; it is but juſt, ſeeing they would not receive thee, that they get worſe in thy room.

Uſe 2. Seeing Chriſt comes near you in this goſpel, and this is one of the market-days, I intreat you, while he is near, receive him; call upon him while he is near; or take it in the plain words of the apoſtle, open to him, take him in, give him welcome while he urges himſelf to ſay ſo on you. There is not a conſcience in any man that hears this goſpel, but he will have this teſtimony from him in it, That he came near them, was in their ſight, and within their reach and power, as it were, if they would have put out their hands to receive him. And ſeeing it is ſo, O receive this goſpel! give him room: while he is content to ſup with you, take him in; make ſure union with him. This is the end why this report is made, and Chriſt is laid before you, even that you may caſt yourſelves upon him.

I would follow this *uſe* a little, by way of exhortation and expoſtulation jointly, ſeeing the doctrine will bear both; for when Chriſt is brought ſo near, even to the mouth and to the heart, it will be great ground

ground of reproof and expoſtulation, if he be rejected. Be exhorted, therefore, to be in earneſt; ſeeing, 1. It is a matter of ſuch concernment to you. Many nations, kings and kingdoms, have not had Chriſt ſo near them as you have; neglect not ſuch an opportunity. Do ye think that all that is ſaid in the goſpel concerning this, is for nothing? Is it for no uſe that ſuch a report is made, and preaching continued ſo long among you? and if it be for any uſe, is it not for this, that ye may receive the report; and may, by doing ſo, get your ſouls for a prey? To what uſe will preaching be, if this uſe and end of it be miſſed? will your hearing the goſpel make your peace with God, if Chriſt be not received? 2. Conſider the advantages you may have by receiving the goſpel, that others have not. Is it a little thing to be called to God's feaſt, to be married to Chriſt, to be made friends with God, and to enjoy him for ever? The day comes when it will be thought an advantage; and are there motives to perſuade to any thing, like thoſe that are to induce to that? 3. Conſider what it is that we require of you: it is no ſtrange nor hard thing; it is but believing; and this is nothing elſe, but that the report concerning Chriſt be received, yea, that he be received for your own good. This is what the goſpel calls you to, even to betake you to a phyſician for cure, to betake you to a ſurety for your debt. If you could eſcape a reckoning and wrath another way, it were ſomething; but when there is no other way to obtain pardon of ſin, and peace, or to eſcape wrath, and obtain favour and friendſhip with God, but this; and when this way (to ſpeak ſo) is made ſo eaſy, that it is but to ſtoop down, and to take up Chriſt at your foot, as it were, or to roll yourſelves on him, how inexcuſable will you unbelievers be, when you ſhall be arraigned before his tribunal? But, 4. Look a little farther to what is coming: If you were to live always here, it were hard enough to live at enmity with

God: But have ye faith of a judgment after death? If ſo, how will ye hold up your faces in that day, that now refuſe Chriſt? Will not horrible confuſion be the portion of many then? and will any ground of confuſion be like this, the ſlighting of Chriſt? when he ſhall be ſeen coming to judge the ſlighters of him, what horror will then riſe in conſciences, when he ſhall appear, and be avenged on them that were not obedient to this goſpel? As is moſt clear, 2 Theſſ. i. *When our Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed in flaming fire, with his mighty angels from heaven, to take vengeance on all that know not God, and obey not the goſpel.* 5. Conſider, that death and life are now in your offer, chuſe or refuſe: I ſpeak not, nor plead here for free-will, but of your willing choice of that which ye have offered to you; for one of two muſt be, either ſhall ye willingly chuſe life, which is a fruit of grace; or refuſe life, and chuſe death, which will be found the native fruit of your corruption. Ye may have life by receiving Chriſt, who is laid at your door; and if ye refuſe him, death will follow it: As now in hearing this goſpel, ye behave in chuſing or refuſing, ſo will the ſentence paſs on you at the great day; and ſo your ſentence, in a manner, is written down with your own hand, as it is ſaid, Acts xiii. 46. *Ye judge yourſelves unworthy of eternal life;* not out of humility, but maliciouſly. Now when the matter is of ſuch concernment, beware of playing the fool. If ye will continue preſumptuous and ſecure, following your idols, what will the Lord ſay, but let it be ſo, ye are not wronged when ye get your own choice; and he, as it were, does but ratify the ſentence which ye have paſt on yourſelves. I ſhall add but this one word more, and beſeech you that ye would ſeriouſly lay this to heart, as a weighty thing, conſidering the certification that follows on it: it is not only death, but a horrible death, wrath, and wrath with its aggravation from this ground; like that of Capernaum, that

was

was lifted up to heaven in this respect, having Christ brought so near them. To whom this gospel is not the savour of life unto life, it shall be the savour of death unto death. And think not this a common motive, though it be commonly used; it will bring wrath upon wrath, and vengeance upon vengeance on the hearers of this gospel, beyond that of Sodom, if ye be still rejecters of it. Sure none of you will think it an easy thing to be punished as Sodom was, nor digest well the curse that came on them. Is there any of you but would think it uncouth and strange, yea stupendious, to enter into their judgment, and to have your lands turned to a stinking lake, and yourselves eternally tormented with them? But there is more wrath and vengeance following on the sin of unbelief, and rejecting of Christ, when he comes to your door in this gospel. To close up all, Consider that Christ is near you, and hath been long near you, and wooing you; ye know not how many years ye shall have; how soon this gospel may be taken from you, or ye from it; how soon ye may be put in the pit, where ye will gnash your teeth, gnaw your tongues, and blaspheme God: Therefore be serious while Christ is in your offer, and roll yourselves upon him while ye have him so near you; welcome this *hearing* or *report*, while it sounds in your ears, that there may be no just ground of this complaint against you, *Lord, Who hath believed our report?*

SERMON III.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom the arm of the Lord revealed?

THE moſt part of men and women do not much eſteem the preached goſpel; yet if it were conſidered, what is the Lord's end in it, it would be the moſt refreſhing news that ever people heard; to hear the report of a Saviour, is, and ſhould be, great and glad tidings of great joy to all nations: And we ſhould be ſo compoſed to hear ſuch news from God, concerning his will and our own welfare, as to be ſuitably affected with them. It is a wonder that God ſent ſuch a report to people, and in it hath brought Chriſt ſo near them, that he puts him home to them, and lays him before them, even, as it were, at their feet; and as great a wonder, that when the Lord hath condeſcended to give ſuch a Saviour, and brought him ſo near, that all he calleth for is faith to believe the report, or rather faith in him of whom the report is given: which is the ſecond thing in the words.

The ſecond thing then is, The duty that lies on people to whom the Lord ſends the goſpel, or this report, concerning Chriſt; and ye may take it in this general, That it lies on all that hear the goſpel to believe the report that it brings concerning Chriſt, and by

by faith to receive him who is holden forth to them in it. This is clearly implied: Isaiah and all ministers are sent to report concerning him, and to bear witness of him; and it is the duty of all hearers to believe it: and this is the ground of his and their complaint, when people do not believe it. By comparing this text with Rom. x. 16. and John xii. 38. we find it to be saving faith that is here to be understood.

I shall open up this doctrine in three branches, which we find in the words, and will make way for the use. 1. That a people to whom Christ is offered in the gospel, may warrantably accept of Christ; or, the offering of Christ in the gospel is warrant enough to believe in him; otherways there had been no just ground of expostulation and complaint for not believing; for though the complaint will not infer that they had ability to believe, yet it will infer they had a warrant to believe; for the complaint is for the neglect of the duty they were called to. 2. That they to whom Christ is offered in the gospel, are called to believe: It is their duty to do it. Thus believing, in all that hear the gospel is necessary by necessity of command, even as holiness, repentance, *&c.* are. 3. That saving faith is the way and means by which those that have Christ offered to them in the gospel, come to have a right to him, and to obtain the benefits that the scripture report to be had from him. Thus believing is necessary as a means to the end of getting Christ, and all that is in him. This is also here implied in the regret made of the want of faith, which deprives men of Christ, and of the benefits of the gospel.

We shall briefly dispatch the *first* of these, which is, That all that hear the gospel preached, have warrant to believe and receive Christ for their eternal peace, and for making up the breach betwixt God and them: this preached gospel gives you all a warrant to accept of Jesus Christ; and ye should not seek after,

after, nor call for another. I ſhall firſt premiſe two diſtinctions to clear this, and then confirm it. As for the firſt of the two diſtinctions that ſerve to clear it, we may take the goſpel more largely and complexly, in a covenant form, holding forth Chriſt and his benefits on condition of believing; or we may take it as it hold out a promiſe without particular mentioning of a condition. Now when we ſay, that the goſpel commands and warrants all that hear it to accept the offer, we do not mean the laſt, That all that hear the goſpel have warrant to accept the promiſe without a condition, but the firſt; that is, That all the hearers of the goſpel are commanded to accept of Chriſt offered. There is, by the preaching of it, a warrant to cloſe with the report, and take hold of the promiſes, and the things promiſed: ſo that it is the goſpel conditionally propoſed that gives warrant to believe, as believing reſts on Chriſt for obtaining life in him. The ſecond diſtinction is, That we would conſider faith, as it reſts on Chriſt for obtaining union with him, and right to the promiſes; or, as it applies and makes uſe of the benefits to be got in and by Chriſt. The offer of the goſpel gives not to all a warrant to apply the benefits to be gotten by Chriſt inſtantly; but it warrants them to cloſe with him firſt, and then to apply his benefits.

Secondly, For confirmation of this truth. That the general preaching of the goſpel is a warrant for believing and exerciſing faith on Jeſus Chriſt, for making our peace with God, it is clear from theſe grounds. 1. From the nature of the goſpel. It is the word of God, as really inviting to do that which it calls for, as if God were ſpeaking from heaven: It is the word of God, and not the word of man, and hath as real authority to call for obedience, as if God ſpake it immediately from heaven; and the word of promiſe is as really his word, as the word of command, and therefore to be reſted on and improved, as well as

as we are to endeavour obedience to the command. And if we think that God's teſtimony is true, and if we lay any juſt weight on theſe three witneſſes teſtifying from heaven, and on theſe other three teſtifying from earth, 1 John v. 7. then we may reſt on Jeſus Chriſt offered in this goſpel, and believe that thoſe who reſt on him ſhall have life; for it is, as we ſaid, as really God's word, as if he were ſpeaking it audibly from heaven. 2. It may be confirmed from theſe ſolemn things, the *word* and *oath* of God, whereby he hath mightily confirmed the external offer of the goſpel, even by two immutable things, wherein it is impoſſible for him to lie; that thoſe who are fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope ſet before them, may have ſtrong conſolation, as in Heb. vi. 18. And God having thus ſaid and ſworn about this external covenant for this very end, that the hearers of the goſpel may know, that they who receive Chriſt offered therein ſhall have life, it is warrant ſufficient to believe on him for life. It is alſo for this end that he hath put ſeals to the covenant, circumciſion and the paſſover in the Old, and baptiſm and the Lord's-ſupper in the New Teſtament; which are extended, not only to the elect, but to profeſſors in the viſible church, that every one who is baptized and admitted to the communion, may have confirmation, that the offer that God maketh of life through Chriſt, is a true and real offer, and will be made good to the perſons that ſhall receive it, and ſo perform the condition. 3. It may be confirmed from the end for which God hath appointed the word and miniſtry in his church, even to make the offer of Chriſt, and life through him; John xx. 31. *Theſe things are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name:* The word is both written and preached for this very end. 4. And *laſtly*, It is confirmed from the experience of all the ſaints, and from the ground on which

which they believed, which was the same that we have: They had no other ground but the same gospel and word that we have: It was not the secret operation or instinct of the spirit, it is that indeed which works faith, but it was the word which was the ground of their faith; for their is no warrant for faith but in the word: and as many believers as have gone before us, are as so many instances and experiences to confirm this truth to us.

Use. It serves for good use to such as may come to doubt and dispute what warrant they have to believe. We say, ye have as good warrant as Abraham, David, Paul, or any of the godly that lived before you had: Ye have the same gospel, covenant and promises. It was always God's word preached which was the ground of faith: and there needs not be much disputing what is God's purpose; for we are not called to look to that in the matter of believing, more than in the matter of our duty: and as it were evil reasoning to dispute what may be God's purpose in the matter of our duty when we are called to it, it is as bad reasoning to dispute his purpose in the matter of faith. And therefore we leave this use with a word of advertisement, that this gospel, as it lays Christ before you, it gives you warrant to receive him, and rest upon him; and we may say as Paul did, Acts xiii. 38, 39. *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* There is the way held forth for obtaining pardon of sin and peace: the Lord hath made the offer, and laid a fair bridge over the gulf of distance betwixt God and sinners; though ye should never get good of it, and though ye should never set a foot on the bridge. None needs to fear to step forward: Behold, our Lord Jesus hath holden out the golden sceptre: His call may be warrant enough to come:

come: the preaching of this gospel stops all disputing, and banishes debating of the business: it calls all the hearers of it, and gives them warrant to come forward: and it is such a warrant, as they will be found slighters of the great salvation offered, who had this door opened to them and did not step forward; for, as the apostle says, 2 Cor. vi. *Behold, now is the day of salvation; behold, now is the accepted time.* And Heb. xxii. *If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord,* &c. It is the same gospel that from the beginning hath been preached to sinners; and this is the reason why the gospel is called *grace* in, 2 Cor. vi. 1. *We beseech you that ye receive not this grace of God in vain;* and Gal. ii. at the close, *I do not frustrate the grace of God;* for many get the warrant and pass to come and receive Christ, who put it up in their pocket as it were, and make no use of it, as the man that hid the talent in his napkin: the bans of marriage are proclaimed, and the warrant given forth, and yet they halt and come not to the wedding.

We shall add the second branch, which is, That this gospel, where it comes and offers Jesus Christ to sinners, men and women are not only warranted to come, but required and commanded to come: the great duty that the gospel calls for is believing. It leaves it not indifferent to believe or not, but peremptorily lays it on us as a command. Ye hear many sermons, and Christ often spoken of; now this is the great thing called for from you, even believing in Christ; and while it is not performed, there is no obedience given to the gospel.

We shall first confirm, and then make the uses of this branch of the doctrine.

1. For confirmation, take these grounds, 1. From

the manner how the gospel propoſeth faith: It is by way of command in the imperative mood, *Behold, Come ye that are weary*, &c. *Come to the wedding, open*, &c. wherein ſomewhat of the nature of faith is held forth; all theſe being the ſame with believing. 2. It is not only commanded, as other things are, but peculiarly commanded, and there is a greater weight laid on the obedience of this command, than on the doing of many other commanded duties. It is the ſum of all Chriſt's preaching, Mark i. *Repent, and believe the goſpel.* It is the only command which Paul propoſes to the jaylor, Acts xvi. *Believe in the Lord Jeſus*, &c. 3. It is, as it were, the peculiar command that Jeſus Chriſt hath left to his people, 1 John iii. 22. *This is his commandment, That we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt:* And this command of believing on him, is the peculiar command left to, and laid on miniſters to preſs. 4. It will be clear, if we conſider that the great diſobedience that he quarrels for, is, when they do not believe, when ſinners will not come to him. This is his quarrel, John v. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.* And here, *Who hath believed our report?* So Mat. xxiii. *I would have gathered you, and ye would not.* And John xii. 37. *Though he did many mighty works among them, yet they believed not on him.* 5. Look to the nature of the offer made by Chriſt, and to the end of it, and ye will find, that the great thing called for, is the receiving of it, which is nothing elſe but believing; and all our preaching of Chriſt, and of his benefits, are uſeleſs without it. Without this, he wants the ſatisfaction he calls for, for the travel of his ſoul; and without it, the hearers of this goſpel profit not; 1 Pet. i. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, the ſalvation of your ſouls.* The ſubordinate end of preaching, to wit, the ſalvation of our ſouls, cannot be attained without faith.

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The *uſes* are three. 1. It ſerves as a ground for us to propoſe the main goſpel-duty to you, and to teach you what is the great and main thing ye are called to; it is even to believe in Jeſus; to exerciſe faith on him. It is not only that your life ſhould be civil and formal; that ye ſhould read, pray, frequent ordinances; learn the catechiſm, and ſuch like: But this is it, To believe on Jeſus Chriſt for the obtaining of life, and remiſſion of ſins through him. And it is not a thing indifferent to you, but commanded, and with this certification, That if ye believe not, ye ſhall never get life nor pardon of ſin; and therefore, as we tell you, that remiſſion of ſins is preached to you through Chriſt; ſo we command and charge you to believe on him, and receive this goſpel, wherein he is offered for the remiſſion of ſins.

For clearing of this *uſe*, and that we may have the more ready acceſs to application, we ſhall ſpeak a word to theſe three things. *Firſt*, To ſeveral kinds of true faith, three whereof are not ſaving; or to the ordinary diſtinctions of faith. *Secondly*, To the ſcripture expreſſions that hold out the nature of ſaving faith. *Thirdly*, To ſome difference betwixt this ſaving faith, and falſe and counterfeit faith; or to theſe acts of true faith more generally taken, which yet are not ſaving.

For the *firſt* of theſe, When we ſpeak of faith, we ſhall draw it to theſe four kinds ordinarily ſpoken of, and ſhall not alter nor add to the common diſtinctions of faith, though more may be given. The *firſt* is *hiſtorical* faith, which may be called true, being that whereby we aſſent to the truth of a thing, becauſe of his ſuppoſed fidelity that telleth it; as when an author writes a hiſtory, we give it credit upon report that he was an honeſt man that wrote it: So hiſtorical faith is, when people hearing the word preached or read, they aſſent to the truth of it all; and do not queſtion but that Chriſt came into the world, that he

was God and man in one perſon, that he died and roſe the third day, and aſcended to heaven, that they that believe on him ſhall be ſaved, *&c.* and taking the word to be God's word, they may give to it a higher aſſent than they give to any man's word; becauſe God is worthy, infinitely worthy of more credit than any man, yea than all men, and angels too: There may be, I ſay, in this hiſtorical faith of divine truths, a higher or greater aſſent than there is in believing of any human hiſtory, which may be the reaſon why many miſtake hiſtorical faith, and yet it is but of the ſame kind, and a thing which many reprobates have, as John ii. at the cloſe, it is ſaid, *Many believed on him when they ſaw the miracles which he did, but Jeſus did not commit himſelf unto them.* They were brought to believe from the ſigns which they ſaw, that he was more than a mere man, and that it was the word of God which he ſpoke, and yet it was but an hiſtorical faith; yea, this faith may be, and is in devils, who are ſaid, James ii. 9. *to believe and tremble.* There are many, who, if they believe Chriſt to be God and man, and the word to be true, think it enough; yet James having to do with ſuch, tells them, that the devil believes as much as that, and more thoroughly than many that have this hiſtorical faith: He knows God to be true, and one that cannot lie, and he finds it to his loſs; he knows that ſuch as believe cannot periſh, for he cannot get one of them to hell; he knows that there is a time ſet when Chriſt will come to judge the world, and therefore he ſays often to him, *Torment me not before the time.* And as the devil hath this faith, ſo there are many in hell that have it too, The rich glutton had it, therefore he bids go tell his brethren, that they come not to that place of torment; and it is told him, *They have Moſes and the prophets*, &c. which implies, that he then felt the truth of many things he would not believe before. This I ſpeak, that ye may know

know that this hiſtorical faith is the firſt ſtep of faith; but it may be in hell, and ſo in many in whom ſaving faith is not. It is really a wonder, that people who are called Chriſtians ſhould own this to be ſaving faith, and think they are well advanced, when they are only come the devil's length in believing; yea, there are many that never came this length, elſe they would tremble more. The *ſecond* ſort of faith is, The faith of *miracles;* which is often ſpoken of in the New Teſtament, as when the Lord ſaith, *If ye had faith as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, ye ſhould ſay to this mountain be thou removed and caſt into the ſea, and it ſhould be done.* There was an active faith to work miracles, and a paſſive faith to receive the particular effect the miracle did produce: ſome had the faith of miracles to heal, and others to be healed. This is an extraordinary thing, and people may go to heaven without it, and go to hell with it; though they cannot go to heaven without hiſtorical faith. Hence it is ſaid, *Many ſhall come to me in that day, and ſhall ſay, We have caſt out devils in thy name:* To whom he will ſay, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.* And the apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. *If I had all faith, and could remove mountains, if I want charity, it availeth me nothing.* This faith of miracles availeth not alone to ſalvation, becauſe it acts not on Chriſt holden forth in the promiſes, as a Saviour to ſave from ſin; but on Chriſt, as having power and ability to produce ſuch an effect: which may be where there is no quitting of a man's own righteouſneſs; and if there be not grace in the perſon that hath it, it is an occaſion of pride. We call you then to hiſtorical faith, as neceſſary, though not ſufficient; but not to this faith of miracles, it being neither neceſſary nor ſufficient. A *third* ſort of faith is, *Temporary* faith, ſpoken of Matth. xiii. and ſet forth under the parable of the ſeed ſown on ſtony ground, which ſoon ſprings up, but withers: So ſome hearers of the goſpel receive

ceive the word with joy, and are affected with it, but endure not. The difference betwixt this and hiſtorical faith is, That hiſtorical faith, as ſuch, conſiſts in the judgment, and reaches not the affections, at beſt it reaches not the affection of joy; for though the devils tremble, yet they are never glad. Temporary faith reaches the affections, and will make a man to tremble at the threatnings, as Felix did; ſo ſome way to delight himſelf in the promiſes of the goſpel, and to ſnatch them, as it were, from the apprehenſion of the ſweet taſte and reliſh he finds in them. It is even here, as when it is told a whole man, that a phyſician is come to town, he is neither glad nor ſad at it; but tell it to a ſick man, and he is pleaſed, from an apprehended poſſibility of a cure; yet this apprehended poſſibility of a cure never ſends him to the phyſician, nor puts him to apply the cure. The *fourth* ſort is, *Saving* faith; which goes beyond all the reſt, and brings the ſick man to the phyſician, and to make uſe of the cure. There may be ſome meaſure of true ſaving faith, where there is not much temporary faith, or moving of the affections; and there may be a conſiderable meaſure of temporary faith, where there is no ſaving faith at all: Even as a fallen ſtar may ſeem to ſhine more than a fixed one that is over-clouded, yet it hath no ſolid light. Know then, that faith is called for; but take not every ſort of faith for ſaving faith. It would make tender hearts bleed, to ſee ſo many miſtaken in the matter of their faith. There are ſome who ſay, they had faith all their days; O that ye were convinced of the lamentable deceit and deluſion that ye are under! And that ye could diſtinguiſh betwixt faith and preſumption, betwixt hiſtorical and temporary faith, and true ſaving faith! Though the two former be not deluſions, yet in ſo far as ye reſt on the ſame, and take them for ſaving faith, ye are deluded; for ſaving

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ing faith puts you out of yourſelves, to reſt on Jeſus Chriſt.

SERMON IV.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

THE goſpel is a ſweet meſſage, and ought to be glad news when it comes to a people; and therefore, when this report of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is made to ſinners, it is a wonderful ſad complaint that follows on the refuſal, and not welcoming of it; there is no better news a miniſter can carry, than that brought to the ſhepherds by the angels, Luke ii. 10, 11. *Fear not, behold we bring you glad tidings of great joy to all people; unto you is born in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord.* But were it an Iſaiah, it would grieve him when he looks on a fruitleſs miniſtry and deſpiſed goſpel, and make him complain, *Who hath believed our report?* O that we may experimentally know the chearfulneſs and gladneſs that follows the goſpel where it is embraced! And that we may not know the ſorrow and ſadneſs that will follow the challenge for deſpiſing of it! One of theſe two the preached goſpel will be, Either it will be joyful news to you; or, A ſad ground of complaint to God againſt you.

We began to ſpeak of the great duty of a people that

that hears the gospel, and the great means whereby this news becomes delightsome, and that is, by faith receive the report of the gospel, or to believe on Christ reported of in it. This is clearly implied; for the regret which holds out the sin is, *Who hath believed our report?* And therefore the great duty must be to believe, and by faith to receive the report. We come now to speak of the *use;* and because it is the great design of the whole gospel, yea it is the design of the law also, both of which level at this end and scope, even faith in Christ; it will be expedient, and no ways impertinent, that we insist a little on this, especially when so many thousands are utterly ignorant of faith, being strangers to what believing in Christ is; and so great stranger to the native end of the gospel, and out of the way of getting good by the preaching of it, that to this day they have not learned this one lesson, to wit, concerning faith in Christ; and other lessons will be to little or no purpose, till this be learned.

We shall not insist at large on the doctrine of faith; but only, in a plain way, glance at what this great duty is that is required of the hearers of the gospel. It is believing in Christ savingly, or saving faith: for no other thing will hold off the complaint against you: Ye will be complained of, though ye believe with all other faith, therefore it is this faith that is here meant.

That we may come the sooner to what we would be at, we shall premise two or three words. *First*, When we speak of believing here, we presuppose these things that are necessary for clearing the object of faith, and capacitating us to believe, though they be not saving faith: As, namely, 1. That the offer of the gospel must come to people; that the object of faith be held out to them; that it be told them, that there is a way for a sinner's justification through Christ Jesus; and that sinners may be accepted before God

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on his account, or through him. There must also, 2. Be an understanding of this; a conceiving in the judgment what it is. People cannot believe, except they hear; and understand what they hear, so far as distinctly to fix their faith on the thing known. They must know and understand the Mediator's fulness, the covenant's freeness, and the efficacy of faith to make Christ theirs. Yea, 3. It is necessary that there be some acquaintance with our own condition; as, that we are naturally under sin; that we are lost, and under the curse; sick, and utterly unable, and even despair to get ourselves recovered by any thing that is in, or by any thing that we can do of ourselves; and that we are for ever undone, if we get not a Saviour, that our mouth may be stopped. 4. Not only must we know this, but it is necessary that there be an historical faith of it; to believe that there is fulness and sufficiency in Christ; that he is able to cure, and take away the guilt of sin in all that rest on him: These must be believed in general, before ever sinners can rest on him for their own salvation; which supposes that there may be an historical, where there is not a saving faith. Now when we have gone all this length, saving faith is that which the gospel calls for; and it is the heart's acting according to what sound light and conviction it hath on Jesus Christ, as holden forth in the promise, for obtaining of life and salvation thro' him: So that when the soul is lying still under its conviction, and knows it cannot have life but by resting on Christ, and hears that there is a sufficiency in him for supplying all its wants, then the work of the spirit prevails with the soul to cast itself over on him for obtaining of life, and of every other thing needful; it brings the soul to embrace and lay hold on him, not only as one able to save sinners, but to save itself in particular. And this is the native work of faith that unites the soul to Christ, and puts it over the boundary, or march of all delusion: It is the

bringing of a loſt ſinner from the ſerious apprehenſion of his own naughtineſs and undone eſtate, to caſt himſelf on Jeſus Chriſt for the obtaining of life through him.

Secondly, When we ſpeak of faith, we would premiſe this, That even this true and ſaving faith, which is not only in kind true, that is, ſuch as hath a real being, but is ſaving, may be conſidered in its different acts or actings, for its different needs or neceſſities. Though the covenant be one, yet the acts of faith are many, we having to do with pardon of ſin, with ſanctification in its parts, vivification and mortification, with peace, *&c.* faith differently acts on Chriſt and the promiſe for obtaining of theſe. Now the faith that we would inſiſt on is, the faith that reſts on Chriſt for pardon of ſin, on which all the reſt of the acts of faith depend; it is that faith whereby a ſinner receives Chriſt, and caſts himſelf on him; that faith whereby union with Chriſt is made up.

Thirdly, We would premiſe, that there is a great difference betwixt faith, and the effects of it, as peace, joy, aſſurance of God's love, and theſe other ſpiritual privileges that follow believing. It is one thing actually to believe, another thing to have the peace and joy that follows upon and flows from believing; the one being as the putting out of the hand to receive the meat, and the other as the feeding on it: It is the firſt of theſe we mean and intend to ſpeak of, even that faith whereby we lay hold of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and get a right to all theſe privileges in and through him.

Fourthly, We premiſe, that even this ſaving faith hath its degrees, as all other faith hath; ſome have weak faith, ſome ſtronger; ſome have that full aſſurance ſpoken of, Heb. x. or a plerophory, not only as to the object, that it is ſufficient, but as to the apprehending and obtaining of life through that object; ſo that they are able to ſay, *Neither heighth, nor depth, nor*

nor any thing elſe, ſhall be able to ſeparate them *from the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* We ſay then, that ſaving faith hath its degrees, though the degree be not that which we ſpeak of; but it is the kind of this faith, whether weaker or more ſtrong, whereby a loſt ſinner caſts itſelf on Chriſt; the faith which puts the ſinner off the ground it ſtood on, to fix on him the faith which brings the ſoul from the covenant of works, to a new holding of life by Chriſt and his righteouſneſs. We ſhall then ſpeak a little, 1. To what we conceive, this act of ſaving faith is not, for preventing of miſtakes. 2. What way the ſcripture expreſſes it; when then we ſay that ſuch a thing is not ſaving faith, ye ſhould know that this thing is not what ye muſt truſt to; and when we ſay ſuch a thing is ſaving faith, ye ſhould labour to act and exerciſe faith according to it.

Firſt, For what ſaving faith is not. 1. It is not the knowing that Chriſt is God and man; that he was born, was crucified, dead and buried, and roſe again. Aſk ſome, what true ſaving faith is? They will ſay, it is a true knowledge. Aſk them again, how long it is ſince they believed? They will ſay, ever ſince they knew good from evil: Ye ſhould know then, that apprehenſive or literal and ſpeculative knowledge is needful, but it will not be taken for ſaving faith. It is not a touch of warmneſs, or liberty of the affections in a natural way, which may be in unregenerate men, yea poſſibly in Pagans, as in a Felix, who in the mean time have not ſo much as temporary faith, becauſe it riſes not from the word, but from diſpenſations of providence, or from temporary things; and if it riſe from the promiſes of the word, and there be no more, it is but temporary faith. 3. It is not convictions, which many take for faith; and take it for granted, if they be convinced of ſin, they believe; and will ſay, Whom ſhould they believe on but Chriſt, and yet they never follow the convic-

tion, to put in practice what they are convinced of. 4. It is not simply a resolution to believe, as others take saving faith to be, who being convinced that their own righteousness will not do their turn, resolve to believe on Christ for righteousness, but they will take a convenient time to do it; and many maintain their peace with this, though it be no true peace: but a bare resolution to believe, is not faith: Ye use to say, there are many good wishers in hell. I remember the words of a dying man in this place, who thought he believed before, and being asked what difference he conceived to be betwixt the faith he had before, and the faith he now had attained to? he answered, Before I thought or resolved to believe, but never practised it, now I practise believing. There is such a subtilty and deceit in the heart, that if it resolve to believe, and if it observably thwart not with faith, it will sit down on that, as if all were done; therefore the word is, *To day if ye will hear his voice*, that is, to day if ye will believe, *harden not your heart*. This resolving to believe, is like a man sinking in the water, and having a rope cast out to him, he resolves to hold it fast, but does not. So many think they have the promise beside them, and resolve to make use of it, but do not presently do it: So that the ship sinks down, and they perish, while the promise abides and swims above. 5. It is not prayer: There are many that think they believe when they some way repent, pray, and put their hand to other duties, and they know no more of believing but something of that kind. It is true, indeed, prayer may help to believe, yet it is not always with faith: It is not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, that believeth; many will seek to enter that shall not be able: People very often have these two miserable mistakes about prayer, either they put it in the room of Christ, or in the room and place of faith, not considering that they are different things; for faith exer-

ciseth

ciſeth itſelf on Chriſt as Mediator, and prayer taketh him as God, the true object of divine worſhip; yet if it be not founded on Chriſt as Mediator, it is not heard. The acting of ſaving faith is properly on Chriſt held forth in the word, and prayer is a putting up of ſuits according to the word. There are many that know no more what uſe to make of Chriſt, than if he had never been incarnate, nor had come under that relation of a Mediator, and think their prayers ſerve for all; whereas faith not only reſpects Chriſt as God, but his merits as Mediator, and his offices. 6. Nor is faith only a believing this word of God to be true, though we could wiſh many were come that length: It would make a man tremble to hear the blaſphemous words that ſome have, when they are aſked concerning their believing the truth of the Bible. But though ye come that length, it is not enough; the devils believe and tremble. The faith that we call you to is more than hiſtorical; it is reſting on Chriſt, and a cordial receiving of the meſſage which he ſends to you: As ſuppoſe a king ſhould ſend an embaſſage to a perſon to woo her to be his wife, it is one thing to know that there is ſuch a king, another thing to believe that he is real in his offer, and that the woman, by conſenting to marry him, may be, and will be happy, and (which is yet more) actually to receive the meſſage, and to conſent to go and marry him. It is here, as when Abraham's ſervant is ſent to Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. ſhe and her friends believe all the report that the ſervant made of his maſter and of his ſon, that it was true; and then it is given to her option if ſhe will go with the man, and ſhe conſents to go, and actually goeth. This is it we preſs you to, To go with us and cloſe the bargain, and to accept of him, and of life through him. By the ſame ſimilitude ye may know what ſaving faith is, and what is the difference betwixt it and temporary faith. When the great, rich, and brave offer comes to be made to Rebekah,

Rebekah, by a man with many camels, gold and bracelets, when she believes that it is true, and that it is made to her, she is glad, and it may be exceeding glad, if not somewhat vain also, that is like temporary faith: But when it comes to the articles of the contract, it is said to sinners, ye must be subject to Christ, and follow his will, and not your own; this, this binds the bargain. Thus many when they hear there is a possibility of life to be had in Christ, and much more when they hear it is to be had on good, easy and free terms, it will make them smile; but when it comes to that, Psalm. xlv. 10. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, forsake thy father's house*, or the fashions of thy father's house. It halts there, and they suspend and demur to close the bargain; but saving faith goes further on, and, with Rebekah, finally closes the bargain.

Secondly, The next thing is, What is saving faith? or, What is it to believe in Christ? And would to God ye were ready to believe, and as ready to receive the invitation, as to ask the question, and that in asking the question ye were in earnest; for, by the way, many have asked the question, What shall we do to be saved? where, if they had been in earnest, they might have been soon resolved: The answer is at hand, Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. But to them that desire further clearness or confirmation in this business of concern, we shall speak a little; yet ye must know, that it is such a thing as is impossible to be made plain to a proud humoured or unhumbled sinner; it is the poor humbled soul that will understand it; and to such a soul, half a word will be enough.

The plainest way to set it forth, as we conceive, is, to name some scripture expressions and similitudes that hold it forth. The first whereof is that of Mat. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden.* And John vi. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger,*

ger, and he that believeth in me ſhall never thirſt. Theſe expreſſions hold forth theſe three things obviouſly. *Firſt*, An evil which men cleave to. *Secondly*, A good that is offered to them. *Thirdly*, A paſſing from the evil to the good; and ſo *come to me* implies. 1. A hazard that people are in by being at a diſtance from Chriſt. 2. That there is acceſs to Jeſus Chriſt for remedying that evil, and removing of that hazard. 3. A paſſing from the one to the other; a paſſing from our own righteouſneſs to Chriſt's righteouſneſs; a paſſing from our natural condition to Jeſus Chriſt; a real paſſing from death in ourſelves, to life in him. Moſt part think faith to be a conceit, a humour, or a gueſs; that they think they may have, and never know how: But it is a real thing, a coming from our own righteouſneſs, as I ſaid, to his; from a covenant of works, to reſt on Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, held forth in the covenant of grace. This is ſomewhat explained, Rom. vii. where two huſbands are ſpoken of, a woman cannot marry another man till her firſt huſband be dead: So till a ſinner be dead to the law, he cannot marry Chriſt; there muſt be a divorcing from the law and covenant of works, before ye can cloſe with Chriſt.

The ſecond expreſſion is, John i. 12. where faith is held forth as *a receiving* of Chriſt, *To as many as received him, he gave them power to become the ſons of God, even to as many as believed on his name.* And it is well expreſſed in the Catechiſm, to be a receiving of Chriſt, as he is offered in the goſpel. This ſuppoſes that Chriſt is offered to us, and that we are naturally without him. The goſpel comes and ſays, *Why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?* Come and receive a Saviour. And the act of faith is a laying hold of that offer, a receiving and embracing of it; a being well content to take a free diſcharge through his blood.

A third expreſſion is, Phil. iii. 12. where faith is ſet forth as *apprehending* of Chriſt. And Heb. vi. 18.

it

is called a *laying hold* on the hope set before us. And Isa. lvi. 4. a *taking hold* of the covenant. All which suppose us to have a choice given us, and Christ to be holden forth as a city of refuge, and a shelter from that which we are in hazard of. Christ is held out in the gospel as the city of refuge; and the exercise of faith is to run from the hazard to him, as a child that is chased by an unknown and uncouth person, flees unto the mother's arms, or as the man-slayer fled from the avenger of blood to the city of refuge: And faith having run to him, casts itself on him, or thrusts itself, as it were, into his arms.

A fourth expression is, *rolling or casting* of ourselves upon the Lord, as Psalm lv. 22. *Cast thy burden on the Lord:* And Psalm xxxvii. 5. *Commit thy way to the Lord;* it is on the margin, *roll thyself on the Lord*, or *rest* on him; as in ver. 7. and repose thyself on the Lord. The gospel lays Christ, as it were, at our feet, and faith rolls us over upon him. It is the soul's finding itself, through the work of the Spirit, unable to stand under the burden; rolling itself on Christ, as a crazy and weak body casts itself on a down-bed for ease. This is a very emphatic, significant and active expression of faith; setting out a man quitting his own legs or feet, as unable to stand on them, and laying himself on Christ. That is what we call you to, even to quit your own feet, and to roll yourselves on Christ.

A fifth expression is, Rom. x. 3. where it is called *a submitting to the righteousness of God;* which is held forth in the gospel thus: As if a king were proclaiming a pardon to rebels, and saying to them, notwithstanding the many heinous crimes ye have committed, and are guilty of, if ye will confess them, and betake yourselves to my grace and mercy, sincerely resolving to be henceforth faithful and dutiful subjects to me, I will freely pardon you; which gracious offer they most gladly accept of, and submit themselves to it.

Submitting

Submitting is an acquiescing in the terms of the gospel, as it is proposed; as if ye should say, We accept the bargain, and are well content and satisfied with it, In a word, faith carves not out to God our way to salvation, but sweetly submits to the way he hath carved out.

A sixth expression is, *Hiding of ourselves in God, or in Christ:* So the word *trust* in God, signifies to hide ourselves in him, as in a place of refuge; according to that, Prov. xviii. *The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run into it and are preserved,* or hid; or, they flee to it, as doves do to their windows. And this is what the apostle means, Phil. iii. 9. *That I may be found in him, not having my own righteousness,* &c. So that if ye ask, What is faith? It is a man's betaking himself to Christ; that when he shall be called for, it may be answered, Lord, I am in Christ, not having mine own righteousness, *&c.* It is not to be trusting to our good hopes, good prayers, or good meaning; but to Christ's satisfaction, and God's promise. By faith, when rightly exercised, the sinner holds and hides himself in Christ; so as nothing of the man can be seen: And this is well expressed by the Lord, when he says, Isa. xxiii. 26. *Come, my people, enter into your chambers, shut the doors about you, hide yourselves for a little while,* &c. Come under the Mediator's wings, lock in yourselves by faith there, and so make all sure.

A seventh expression is, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. where when Hezekiah is writing to the degenerate tribes to come home again, he bids them, *yield themselves to the Lord;* in the original it is, *give the hand to the Lord:* Even as two men who have been at odds and variance, or have broken the ties that were betwixt them, come to renew their friendship, they join hands; now God is brought in stretching out his hands to you, Isa. lxv. 2. Therefore come and close with him, yield to him, give him the hand, or join

hands with him, and make the bargain and engagement sure for the time to come. All these similitudes borrowed from men, are partly to make the nature of faith obvious and clear, and partly to strengthen and confirm it.

An eighth expression is that of *opening* to Christ, Cant. v. 2. *Open to me my dove*, &c. Rev. iii. 30. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man open the door to me*, &c. Acts xvi. it is said, *The Lord opened the heart of Lydia.* When the word comes, sinners hearts are locked against God; Christ comes by his word, and knocks hard to get in; he bids us open and take in our Saviour, and faith discerns his voice, and gives him entrance: It is the letting of the word sink into our hearts, and making him welcome. It is not only the crediting the word as true, but the receiving of him whom the word offers, for the end for which he is offered: And this is, when the work of the Spirit with the word raises good and and strong inclinations within, and makes the heart to open and receive Christ. Wherever Christ hath a design of grace on the soul, and comes with power, he continues knocking, and calling hard and loud, till doors and gates be cast open to him.

A ninth expression or similitude under which faith is held forth, is that of a *marriage*, or of *covenanting* or consenting, whether in marriage or otherwise, but more especially in marriage. When Christ takes on him the place of a wooer, ministers are his embassadors, the word is their instructions, wherein he bids them go tell sinners that *all things are ready*, and to pray them to come to the marriage, or to marry and match with him; and faith is a coming to this husband, a receiving of the word of invitation, a consenting to the marriage: It is a change or mutation of qualities; we change fashions, we subscribe the contract on the terms offered us. In the bargain of grace some thing is offered by God, and that is Christ and

and his fulneſs; and there is ſomething done on our ſide, and that is accepting of him by faith: And this is not ſo much a ſaying with the tongue, as it is a believing with the heart; as in Rom. x. 10. *With the heart man believes unto righteouſneſs.* It is the heart's preſently ſubſcribing the marriage-contract, and going to live and cohabit with him, though confeſſion will be readily made with the mouth alſo, as he calls for it.

A tenth expreſſion or ſimilitude, is that of *buying; Ho, every one* (crieth the prophet, Iſa. lv. 1.) *that thirſts come to the waters; and he that hath no money, come, buy,* &c. So Rev. iii. 18. *Buy of me eye-ſalve,* &c. The meaning of which is, that God in the goſpel ſets forth, as in a market, to ſinners rich and rare wares, good and cheap, or at very low and eaſy rates; and that believing is like buying the wares. Life eternal is offered on condition of believing on Chriſt, and the poor ſinner thinks that a good bargain, for it takes no money from him. Rev. xxii. 17. this is called *willing; Whoſoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.* The ſoul hath a good will to the thing: It is held forth by ſeveral other expreſſions in ſcripture; as, *cleaving to the Lord,* Joſh. xxiii. 8. and Acts xi. 23. it is called *hearing, hearkening,* and *inclining of the ear,* Iſa. lv. 2, 3. an attentive, concerned, and holy liſtening to, and taking hold of this offer: It is a cleaving to the Lord, as wood-bind or ivy cleaves to an oak, becauſe its life depends on it. And Deut. xxx. and Joſh. xxiv. it is called a *chuſing of the Lord,* upon deliberation, as knowing that we have need of him, that he is a Saviour ſuited completely to all the neceſſities of our ſouls, and that we are warranted to believe on him: It is the native act and exerciſe of faith to chuſe Chriſt among all the wooers that court the ſoul. So, likewiſe, it is ſet out under *truſting and committing,* Pſal. xxxvii. *Commit thy way to the Lord, truſt in him. I*

know, saith Paul, 2 Tim. i. 22. *He is able to keep that which I have committed to him.* It is to give Christ the credit of your salvation. It is one thing to give a man credit that he is true, and another thing to intrust him with our greatest concerns. We credit many whom we will not thus trust, nor commit ourselves and concerns to. The former (when these are applied to God) is historical faith; but this latter is saving faith, when we dare trust ourselves to him, and to his word: And we think this expression holds forth as much of the nature of saving faith as any of the former, if we could understand it when we dare trust ourselves to him, because he hath given his word. Thus also, to act and exercise faith on him for temporal or for spiritual things, is to expect the event from God; but so, as we expect and look for it on this ground, that Christ hath purchased it, and we have accepted him on his offer, which gives us a right to these things needful for us, and purchased by him. It is said, Matth. xxii. when the invitation came, that some made light of it; but faith, on the contrary, lays weight on it, and we commit ourselves to God on that ground. It is called, Rom. vi. *A delivering up ourselves to the word*, and to him in it. It puts a blank in Christ's hand, to be filled up as he pleases.

You see then what ye are called to; it is to open to Christ, to come to him, to marry him, to cast yourselves on him, to commit yourselves to him, to give him credit, &c. And is there any of these things unreasonable or prejudicial to you? And if they be very reasonable and advantageous, (as, indeed, they are) we would exhort you to come to him, to receive him, to apprehend him, to flee to him, to take hold of him, to marry him, &c. Believe on him, and by believing, be united to him, and get a right to him, and to all his purchase; give him the credit of saving your souls. This we call for from you, and if ye do it

it not, the complaint in the text will ſtand againſt you, *Who hath believed our report?*

SERMON V.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IT is a great matter to get the goſpel once brought amongſt a people, and ſuch meſſengers, as may make the ſavoury report of Jeſus Chriſt unto them: Yet this is not all, there is a greater work behind, and that is, to get Chriſt believed on, and to get the report concerning him received by the people to whom it is made. This being the greateſt, graveſt, and the moſt eminent work of the prophets, and of the miniſters of the goſpel, not ſo much to get a word to ſay, as to get the word believed. And this is Iſaiah's complaint, that though he himſelf brought the report concerning Chriſt, and foreſaw many more would bring it, yet that the exerciſe of faith in thoſe who ſhould hear it would be very rare.

We ſpoke of the great thing called for from a people to whom this goſpel comes, and the report of Chriſt is made, and that is, to believe on him; to receive and reſt on him of whom the report is made.

Except

Except this be, though there were never ſo many preachers, and encouragements to preach; though you ſhould flock to the ordinances every day, the ground of complaint will ſtill remain, if there be not ſaving faith in Jeſus Chriſt, which is the ſubſtance of the goſpel.

After confirmation of this point, we ſhewed what faith is from the ſeveral names the ſcripture giveth it, and wherein the exerciſe of ſaving faith is holden forth. All which imply theſe three; 1. A great hazard and danger that the hearers of the goſpel are in: Whether they be ſenſible of it in ſuch a meaſure at leaſt, or not, we ſpeak not now, yet they are ſo really; ſo much *fleeing*, *coming*, *laying hold*, *apprehending*, &c. inſinuate. 2. A fulneſs and ſufficiency in Chriſt Jeſus holden forth to them, as the object of their faith; as one that can deliver out of that danger, and make right whatever is wrong. 3. An act, wherein mainly the exerciſe of faith is holden forth; and it is the act of the ſoul under that danger and diſtreſs, betaking itſelf to Chriſt's fulneſs for help: It is a fleeing from the curſe of the law to him, as to the city of refuge. So every name that faith gets, ſets out a man acting and moving ſome way for Chriſt's remedying the evil, and removing the hazard he is in.

Having ſpoken a little to this, that faith is the main duty that is called for, we ſhall now follow the exhortation to preſs you to it; it being to no purpoſe to ſpeak of Chriſt, and of faith in him, except he be received. This is the end of the word written and taught, John xx. at the cloſe, Even to believe in the name of the Son of God, and by believing to receive life in and through him.

And therefore, *Secondly*, Seeing this is the main duty called for by the goſpel, That by faith ye ſhould receive it, and Chriſt offered in it, we earneſtly exhort you to it. It is not ſo much to this or that particular

ticular duty, though these be implied; it is not so much to attendance on ordinances, nor to submission to discipline and censures, though these also be duties that we exhort you; but it is to obedience to the great command of faith, even to believe on him whom the Father hath sent and sealed: It is to receive this gospel; to submit to the righteousness of faith; to open to him that is knocking at the door; to yield to him, and to give him the hand, that past quarrels may be removed, and taken out of the way. Except this be, we declare to you, in his name, that ye do not bring forth the fruit that this gospel calleth for from you; and that no less will be acceptable to God, nor accepted from you by him.

And to add here the *third* branch of the doctrine, we say, That no less will do your business as a necessary means for attaining the promise, and that which is promised. 1. Look to all the promises, whether of pardon of sin, or of peace with God, of joy in the Holy Ghost, and of holiness and conformity to God: There is no access to these, or to any of them, but by faith; this is the very proper condition of the covenant of grace, and the door whereby we step into it. And if ye think pardon of sin, peace with God, and holiness to be necessary, then this great gospel-duty of believing is no less necessary; for the Lord saith, John iii. 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already.* 2. Look to the performance of any duty, or mortification of any lust or idol, and faith is necessary to that, 1 John. iii. 5. *It is by faith we obtain victory over the world:* It was by faith (Heb. xi.) that all the worthies spoken of there wrought righteousness, *&c.* 3. When any duty is done, of whatsoever nature it be, there is no acceptation of it without faith: It is not our praying, or our coming to the church, that will make duty to be accepted, but it is faith; *The word profited them not*, saith the apostle, Heb. iv. 2. *because it was not mixed with faith.* And that for making

making the duty acceptable, faith is neceſſarily requiſite, we may clearly ſee, Heb. xi. where it is expreſly ſaid, *That without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* And how is it that Abel offered a more excellent ſacrifice that Cain? It was nothing ſure in Cain's ſacrifice itſelf that made it be rejected, nor any thing in Abel's that made it be received or acceptable, but faith in the Meſſiah to come, that was found to be in the one, and was miſſing in the other. Is there not reaſon then to preſs this duty on you? And to exhort you not to think this a common and eaſy thing, tho' the moſt part think it to be ſo? If we look to the benefits of it, to the difficulty of it, and to the rarity of it in the world, there is no duty needs more to be preſſed than this, even that Chriſt Jeſus ſhould have the burden of your immortal ſouls caſt on him by this ſaving faith. I ſhall therefore, in the further proſecution of this, *Firſt*, Shew what mainly you ſhould eſchew and avoid, as that whereat people more ordinarily ſtumble. *Secondly*, What it is we would exhort you to, and what grounds.

For the *firſt*, I know the deceits and miſtakes in men about the exerciſe of faith are ſo many, that they are more than can well or eaſily be reckoned up; yet we ſhall in ſome generals, ſpoke of before, hint at a few of them; for as long as ye continue in the ſame ſnares, they muſt be ſtill pointed out to you, and endeavours ſtill uſed to undeceive and deliver you out of them: And therefore, 1. Beware of reſting on a doctrinal faith, which before I called hiſtorical. We know it is hard to convince ſome that they want faith; yet we would have you to conſider, that it is not every kind of faith, but ſaving faith, that will do your buſineſs: It is the want of that which the prophet complains of. And therefore, to open this a little, ye ſhould conſider, That there may be really ſuch a faith as is an aſſent to the truth of the word in a natural man, yea, in a reprobate; but that faith will never

ver unite to Chriſt, nor be united with the pardon of ſin. *Firſt*, I do not ſay, that every one that is in the viſible church hath this doctrinal faith, to believe a heaven and a hell, that the ſcripture is the word of God, and that all that believe in Chriſt ſhall get pardon of ſin and life; the carriage, alas! of many teſtifies that they have not thus much, whatever fleeting notions they may have of theſe things, or whatever eſteem they may ſeem to put on the goſpel, and whatever profeſſion they may make that they believe the truth of it, yet in their deeds they deny it; for if there were a fixedneſs in the doctrinal faith of the goſpel in men, they durſt not for their ſouls live as they do. Neither yet, *Secondly*, do we ſay, That all they that have this doctrinal faith of the goſpel, or ſomewhat of it, do believe every paſſage in it alike; but often as they pleaſe them, they believe them. Hence many believe what the word ſpeaks of mercy, and of pardon of ſin, and will not queſtion that; but what it ſpeaks of holineſs, and of the ſeverity of God's reckoning with men for ſin, they do not ſo credit that part of the word. It is true, where the faith of the one is, the faith of the other will ſome way be; but becauſe the one agrees better with their corruption than the other, therefore the one is not ſo received as the other; and it is very frequent with ſuch, to be found diminiſhing from one place, and adding to another, of the word of God. Nor, *Thirdly*, do we ſay, That all men do, in a like and equal degree, believe the truth of the word: There is in ſome more knowledge, in ſome leſs; in ſome more convictions, in ſome fewer; and though we preach to you all, yet there are ſome that believe not this to be God's ordinance: There are many who will not be ſaved, that take this word to be the word of God, and believe what is the meaning of it, becauſe the word itſelf ſays it is ſo. And the reaſon of this is, 1. Becauſe there is nothing that is not ſaving, but a natural man may

have it. Now this doctrinal faith is not saving, and so a natural man may have it, yea, the devils believe and tremble; and James does not dispute with these to whom he writes on this account, that they believed not this, but tells them, that historical faith was not enough; and we think a man in nature may have a great persuasion of the truth of the word of God, and that what it says will come to pass, and yet still continue but a natural man. A second reason is, Because the scripture speaks so often of many sorts of faith that are not saving; as, Exod. xiv. at the close, it is said, *The people believed the Lord:* And Psal. cvi. 12. *Then they believed his word, and sang his praise:* And John ii. 23. *Many believed on Christ, to whom he did not commit himself.* There was a faith in them, which his signs and miracles extorted from them, that was not saving. And Matth. xiii. two or three such acts of faith are spoken of in the parable of the sower that were not saving, however found they might be in their own kind. And 1 Cor. xiii. we have such a faith spoken of, as a man dare not deny the truth of the word, though he should bring his body to be burnt by his avouching of the same. A third reason is, Because as much credit may be given to the word, as is given to any other history that is creditably believed; and it is on this ground that we believe there was such men as Cæsar, Pompey, Wallace, *&c.* And it being certain that there may be impressions on the consciences of hearers that this is God's word, backed with some common work of the Spirit, and that it is generally received to be the word of God in the part of the world we live in, what wonder is it that people believe thus, and drink in this historical or doctrinal faith of the word, so as they may even dare to suffer death for it? And yet in the mean time they may want saving faith; the devils being as firmly persuaded as any natural man is, that God is true, and that his word will be performed, and therefore they

they say to Christ, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* The pangs of a natural conscience in men will assure them of a judgment to come, though they tremble to think on it.

And therefore, before we proceed further, take a word of *use* from this, to let you see the great and very general mistake of the most part of the hearers of the gospel, in resting on this doctrinal faith. If ye tell them that they have no faith, they will not by any means own that. They believe there is a Saviour, and that he is God and man, and that such as believe on him shall be saved, and on this they rest. It is such as these who think they have believed ever since they had any knowledge, because the word was always, or very long since, received in the place where they lived for the word of God, and they believe it to be so, and know no difference betwixt believing the word, and believing on Christ holden forth in it; though, alas! many of you believe not thus much, for if ye were among the Jews, ye might be soon brought to question the truth of the gospel. But though ye had the real faith of the truth of the word, take not that for saving faith; for as there is a real sorrow that is not the saving grace of repentance unto life, so there is a sort of real faith that hath a real object, and a real being in the judgment, which yet is not a real closing with Christ, and so not saving faith: As suppose a man pursued by his enemy should see a strong castle-door standing open, or one in hazard at sea should see dry land, yet if he should stand still while the enemy pursues him, or abide still in the sinking vessel, the sight of the castle-door open, nor of the dry land, would not save him. So it is not the believing that there is a Saviour come into the world to save sinners, that will save, except there be a resting on him as he is holden forth in the word of the gospel. Historical faith is only, as it were, a looking on the Saviour; but saving faith cleaves to him, and

reſts on him. Hiſtorical faith looks on Chriſt, but acts not on him, cloſes not with him; and therefore ſuch as have this only, and no more, ſink and periſh without getting good of him: We would think it a great ſtep to get many of you to believe as the devil, who believes and trembles: The little trembling there is, ſhews that there is but little of this hiſtorical faith; yet, as I have often ſaid, this is not all; ye may have this, and yet if ye halt there, ye will certainly periſh, if ye were never ſo confident to be ſaved. The apoſtle doth well diſtinguiſh theſe, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him:* Where theſe two are preſuppoſed; *Firſt*, Believing that God is, or hath a being; and, *Secondly*, Believing that his promiſe is ſure and firm, that he is faithful who hath promiſed, and will make his word good. And then, *Thirdly*, On both theſe follows a coming to him, as a rewarder of diligent ſeekers of him. The firſt two take in hiſtorical faith: For to believe that God is, is natural; and to believe that God is faithful in his promiſe, may be in natural man: But to come to him, to get the hazard that the ſoul is in, removed through Jeſus Chriſt, is a thing that few do attain to. This then is the firſt thing we would be aware of, not aware to believe the truth of the word, but to be aware of reſting on it as a ſaving faith: It is not enough to look on Chriſt, and to grant that it is he; but we muſt never be ſatisfied till we can rely on Chriſt, and lay the weight of our ſalvation and peace on him in his own way.

The ſecond thing ye ſhould beware of is, Some common and quickly tranſient work on the affections, that may accompany hiſtorical faith: Whether the affection of grief, or the affection of joy be ſtirred thereby, both are unſafe to be reſted on, when ye cannot prove your reſting on Chriſt, *i. e.* where there is no ſufficient ground to prove it by; Though ye ſhould tremble

tremble as Felix did, and be under alarming convictions of conſcience and fears of your hazard, or tho' ye ſhould be affected with joy, as the temporary believer may be, and ſometimes is, what will that profit you? It is a great miſtake to take ſome ſmall work on the affections, which at the beſt is but an effect of hiſtorical faith, for a ſaving work of the Spirit. Or, *Secondly*, If it be not an effect of hiſtorical faith, it is an effect of a challenge of conſcience, and ſmiting of the heart, as in Saul, who could ſay to David, *Thou art more righteous than I, my ſon David.* Or, *Thirdly*, It is ſome common work of the Spirit, ſuch as was in Simon Magus, of whom it is ſaid, *he believed*, and deſired the apoſtle to pray for him; for men to conclude on this ground, that they are brought out of nature into a ſtate of grace, is to build upon a ſandy foundation. The apoſtle ſpeaketh, 2 Cor. vii. 10. of worldly ſorrow, as well as of a godly ſorrow; and as there may be a worldly ſorrow, ſo there may be a carnal joy, a ſort of rejoicing in prayer, or at hearing of a ſermon, or at a ſacrament, which is not ſaving faith. Some hear the word with joy, Matth. xiii. who yet *endure not.* And John Baptiſt's hearers rejoiced in his light for a ſeaſon: Even as a ſick man, who hearing (as we hinted before) that a phyſician who is ſkilful and able to cure him is come to town, he becomes glad in hopes of a cure of his diſeaſe; but here is the obſtacle, when the phyſician tells the man that he muſt be ſo and ſo abſtemious, and keep himſelf under ſuch a ſtrict diet, he will not obey, and ſo all his joy vaniſhes. There is ſomething like this in temporary faith, where ſome remote expectation of ſalvation will raiſe a carnal joy and gladneſs; but when it comes to this, that a man is called to quit his luſts, or his eſtate, or in the world, to undergo trouble and perſecution for the goſpel, by and by he is offended, he thinks, to ſay ſo, *A bird in hand is worth two in the buſh;* and therefore when the ſtorm blows in

in his teeth, he turns his back and runs away. We find this often in people that when ſick, they have fits of ſerioufneſs, and ſometimes flaſhes of ſorrrow under convictions, and ſometimes flaſhes of joy, that vaniſh when they come to health again. When we ſpeak of ſome common work on the affections, we mean, among other things, ſome liberty and warmneſs of ſpirit in prayer; which, no queſtion, even unrenewed men may find more at one time than another, as when they are in ſome great hazard or ſtrait, they will be more than ordinary ſerious in that duty, and yet this may be but an effect of nature. This proves a great ſtumbling and neckbreak to many, that they think they are well enough, if now and then they have utterance in prayer, words beyond what they expected, and upon reflecting find that they have been in earneſt, though it was but moral ſerioufneſs that moved them in prayer, in the place of ſaving faith; ſo that when they pray with warmneſs they think they believe, when in the mean time they never knew what it was in good earneſt to lay themſelves on Chriſt Jeſus: Therefore when we invite you to believe, this is another thing we would bid you beware of, that ye take not a flaſh of ſenſe for true faith.

3. There is yet a more ſubtile, though no leſs dangerous miſtake, that ye ſhould beware of, and that is, when faith is confounded with obedience, and is looked on in juſtification as a piece of new obedience, with love, repentance, and other duties of holineſs: So ſome think they believe, becauſe they have ſome natural awe of God in their minds, with ſome fear of ſin, perform ſome duties of religion, and walk honeſtly, as they think, according to the rule; which is to confound the covenant of works and of grace, and to make the covenant of works a covenant of grace, or to run the covenant of grace into a covenant of works; only with this difference, that though their works be not perfect, but defective, yet where-

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in they are defective, they think there is worth in their faith to make up that want, and to supply that defect; and so by faith they think they will obtain the acceptation of their works, and of their persons on account of their works: They look upon their works as pleasing to God, but because they are not perfect, they will believe, or exercise faith, to make up their defects; to which the way of grace is quite contrary, which makes the tree first good, and then the fruit. This way, that many take, is not to draw the evidences of believing from works of holiness, which is warrantable; but the founding of faith, or their hope of heaven on works: And the use they make of their faith, is to ward off challenges of conscience for the imperfection of their works, and to make faith procure acceptance (as I just now said) of their works, and acceptance of their persons for their works sake.

4. Beware of that which ye ordinarily call a certain assurance, or sure knowledge of your salvation, and that all the promises are yours, whereby ye think yourselves in no hazard; a hope and assurance of heaven that ye can give no ground for, nor proof of, only ye think ye are sure of pardon of sin, and of coming to heaven, and that ye are obliged to maintain that groundless hope; but this is not saving faith, for it is a hope of heaven, that can give you no right to Christ: There must first be a fleeing to him, and closing with him, before ye can have any true and well-grounded hope of heaven; but your hope and confidence is, never to question the matter: Ye are like Laodicea, who thought herself rich, and to stand in need of nothing, when she was miserably poor; or like those men, who, when God was threatning them with judgment, yet would needs presume to think that they leaned on the Lord. I think, among all the persons that God hath indignation against, it is in a special manner against those who have this sort of hope, and to whom God discovereth the groundlessness

leſſneſs of it, and yet they will ſtill ſtoutly maintain and ſtand faſt by their hope. It is to theſe he ſpeaks, Deut. xxvi. 16. who deſpiſe and mock God's threatnings, and ſay, *We ſhall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our own hearts, and add drunkenneſs to thirſt.* The Lord there pronounceth a curſe, and to the curſe addeth an oath, that he will not ſpare ſuch perſons, but will ſeparate them for evil, and cauſe all the curſes of the law to overtake them. Judge ye now what a condition this is for perſons to be in, to be believing that all the promiſes are theirs, and yet, inſtead of that, to be (in the mean time) liable to all the curſes threatned in the word of God. It is this that we call *preſumption*, and the *hope of the hypocrite will periſh*, Job viii. 13. The confidence of ſuch ſhall be rejected and ſweeped away, as a ſpider's web ſhall be rooted out of their tabernacles, and bring them to the king of terrors. They think they believe always, and that when they are not troubled nor diſquieted they never want faith, but have a great deal of it; which yet is but a conjecture, which cannot ſupport and uphold them when they come to a ſtrait. When they are more ſecure, they think they believe very well; and when they are more awakened and diſquieted, they think they believe leſs, and their fancied faith quite ebbs on them: When they hear of any exerciſe of mind, or trouble of conſcience in others, they wonder that they will not believe; and all their work is to maintain their deep ſecurity and ſtrong deluſion. This is then the *fourth* thing ye ſhould beware of, for it is not the faith that will remove the complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* And yet how many are there of this ſort, who ſay they ſhall have peace, and pleaſe themſelves with their good hopes, ſay the word what it will. O! be perſuaded, that this is nothing elſe but woeful unbelief and preſumption; and therefore we muſt preach to you the terror and the curſe of God, though ye

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cry peace to yourselves. The Lord complains of such persons, Jer. v. 12. saying, *They have belied the Lord:* He sent his prophets to denounce judgments in the days of Josiah, when there was a fair profession of religion and reformation, yet they would believe and hope that no evil should overtake them.

That which we aim at in this part of the use, is to make way for what follows; even to give you a clear ground for exercising of faith on Jesus Christ, when all these stumbling-blocks and mistakes are moved out of the way. We therefore exhort you, to lay your hand to your heart, and narrowly to try if ye have called, or accounted any of these to be saving faith; for there are hundreds, nay thousands, that perish under these pretexts, deceiving themselves, and deluding others, by a faith they were born and brought up with, and they have no more but their groundless hope to prove their faith by; and this they will stand by, say to them what ye will: but be not deceived, for God will discover you. Ye think a strong presumption is faith, and that ye can by such a faith drink in the promises; but God will make you vomit them up, and ye shall be declared to be void of faith in the great day. Therefore be more jealous over your faith, and seek to have your hold of Christ made sure, which is done, when from the belief of your hazard and self-emptiness, and of Christ's fulness, ye go to him and close with him, to make up all your wants. This faith is specially qualified by the account on which we go to him, and rest on him, even as a conscientious duty is that which flows from a command, as obedience to it, so one of the main things that qualifies this faith is a receiving Christ as Christ, or as he is holden forth in the gospel, which is therefore well put in the description given of faith in the Catechism. And it is called *a believing on him whom the Father hath sent:* Which is not to believe on Christ simply, but as he is holden

forth in the word of the gospel. Presumption may look on Christ and his fulness, and few or none will readily dare to give him a direct and downright refusal, or to reject him professedly and avowedly, when they hear of such happiness as is to be had in him: But that which we say qualifies faith, is to desire, receive, and embrace him according as he is holden forth in the gospel, *for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 2 Cor. i. 30. when he is trusted with an eye to the promise, and when that which makes us rest on him is the word of God; for though Christ be the material objects of faith, yet the word is the formal object, whereby we get a right to him, and there is no getting hold of Christ, but in, and according to his word: And therefore the generality of people (who, on the matter, take the Antinominian way) think they have no more to do but to apply Christ, and to count him their own at the very first; but by their not exercising faith on the word of promise, they miss him. This is, as I have said, a main qualification of saving faith, even to rest on Christ as he is held forth in the word, and by the word to take hold of him, and rest upon him. Saving faith doth not simply rest on Christ, because he is merciful, and hath all fulness in him; but it rests on him and his fulness, as received in the word, and offered by God in his word. Faith takes God's faithfulness in his word, and lays hold on him by that. Christ is the thing that makes happy, but God's faithful promise is the right by which we get a title to Christ. We should never like that faith that knows not the use of the word, that betakes itself to Christ, or the thing in the word, but considers not the word that holds him forth; whenas it is only this word that gives us warrant to expect that his fulness shall be made ours, and supply all our wants. Many desire, and expect good of God, but get it not, because their expectation is not founded on his word, and that God's

God's faithfulneſs in his word is not cloſed withal. In a word, I would have you to think, that faith is neither an eaſy, nor an inſuperable difficult thing; but that it is eaſy to go wrong, and difficult to go right; and that, without God's ſpecial and powerful guidance, ye cannot believe nor exerciſe faith, nor walk in the way of believing in him, and dependence on him; ſo that ye may be helped to make a right uſe of Chriſt, and to build upon him; that ye may not ſlip nor ſtumble, and fall on the ſtumbling-ſtone laid in Zion, on which ſo many fall every day, and break themſelves to pieces.

SERMON VI.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IF it were not recorded in the infallible ſcriptures of truth, we would hardly believe, that there could be ſo much powerful and ſweet preaching of the moſt excellent inſtruments that ever were employed, and yet that there ſhould be ſo little fruit following on it: Who would believe that Iſaiah, ſo excellent, ſo ſweet, and ſo evangelic a prophet, ſhould have ſo many ſad complaints as he hath? chap. vi. 28, and 58. that he ſhould be put to bring in the Lord, ſaying, *All the day long have I ſtretched out my hands to a rebellious people*, chap. lvi. And that here himſelf ſhould have

cauſe to ſay, *Who hath believed our report?* It is ſcarce one man here or there that hath ſavingly believed on Chriſt: And this is the third thing in the words that now we would ſpeak to; and it is a very ſad, though a very clear truth.

The *doctrine* is this, That there may be much powerful preaching of the goſpel, and yet unbelief generally among the hearers of it: Or take it with dependence on the former two; namely, 1. That the great work of the miniſtry is, To propoſe and make Chriſt known to a people. 2. That the great duty of people that have Chriſt propoſed to them is, To believe on him. Then this follows on the back of theſe, 3. That people may have Chriſt propoſed to them, brought to their heart and mouth; and though it be but believing that is called for from them, yet that cannot be obtained from moſt of them. This goſpel-duty of believing is often ſlighted by the hearers of the goſpel. This is clearly held forth here, *Who hath believed our report?* We have called for faith; but it is a rare thing, among the multitude of hearers, to find one that believeth ſavingly.

To make out, and prove this a little further, we ſhall conſider this complaint, with theſe aggravations of it, which will make it the more clear, and ſo the more to be wondered at. As, 1. Thoſe of whom the complaint is made are not heathens, but God's own people; as the Lord complains, Pſalm vii. 10, 11. *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would have none of me.* Our Lord Jeſus complains of Jeruſalem, Matth. xxiii. at the end, *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thee, and thou wouldeſt not.* That the Lord's own profeſſing people ſhould not believe, nor receive the report that is made of him, heightens the complaint, and aggravates their guilt exceedingly. 2. It is not a complaint as to one ſermon, or time; but it is a complaint frequently repeated, as to many fruitleſs ſermons and times,

times, yea, generations. Isaiah preached long in many kings reigns, and yet all along his prophecy he complains of it, as chap. vi. 11. *How long, Lord, shall their eyes be blind, and their ears heavy?* &c. And chap. xxviii. 9. *Whom shall I teach doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts, precept must be upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little.* And chap. lxv. 2. *All day long I have stretched out my hands to a rebellious people.* And here again, *Who hath believed our report?* Much and long, or many years preaching, much plain and powerful preaching, and yet little or no fruit; *They are snared and taken, and fall backward,* for all that: And this was not in Isaiah's days only, but in Christ's days, John xii. 37, 38. and in Paul's days, Rom. x. 16. where the very words in the text are repeated; nay, it runs down from the first spreading of the gospel, even to these latter days wherein we live; many hear, but few receive the report. 3. Consider how many they are that complain, it is not one or two, or a few, but all the preachers of the gospel: It is not, *Lord, Who hath believed* my *report;* but, *Who hath believed* our *report?* It is complained of by Isaiah here, and in several other places named before: It is complained of by Micah, chap. vii. 1. *Woe is me, for I am as they who have gathered the summer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat, the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none upright among men,* &c. It is complained of by Hosea, chap. xi. 7. *Though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him;* that is, none would give him the glory of his grace in believing on him. Ah sad word! As is that also in Psalm lxxxi. the Lord calls, *Hear, O my people, and I will testify to thee; open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it: But my people would not hearken to my voice and Israel would none of me.* And what prophet is there almost, if I need say almost, but one way or other

other makes this complaint, That though the Lord ſtretched out his hands all day long, yet it was to a rebellious and gain-ſaying people. Look forward, and ſee what our Lord ſays of John Baptiſt, and of himſelf, *Whereto ſhall I liken this generation? It is like children ſitting in the market-places, ſaying one to another, We have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented:* That is, there is much preaching by men endowed with ſeveral gifts, but none of them do the people much good. John preached with much holy auſterity, like one mourning; the *Son of man* moſt ſweetly, like one piping; yet neither the one nor the other prevailed. There are ſome Boanerges, ſons of thunder, alarming and thundering preachers; ſome Barnabas's, ſons of conſolation, ſweet comforting preachers, yet all gain but little on the hearers. Our Lord ſaith, Matt. xxiii. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered you?* This is the ordinary complaint, *Ye would not.* A *4th* aggravation is, If we conſider who they are that meet with this unbelief and unfruitfulneſs in them they preach to; if it were poor cold preachers, ſuch as we, alas! in a great meaſure are, or ſuch as the Scribes and Phariſees were, or if it were ſuch as had learning only, and not piety, it were no ſuch wonder to ſee them meet with unbelief and unfruitfulneſs in their hearers; but it is even thoſe whom the Lord has ſent and ſharpened, as arrows out of his quiver, as this prophet was. It is even his preaching that is fruitleſs in a great meaſure: And was there ever a more ſweet, plain, powerful, and delightful preacher than Iſaiah? that even the very reading of his ſermons may affect the readers, yet is there any that complains more, or ſo much as he does in the chapters before cited? Probably ye may think, that if Iſaiah were a preacher now, people would be moved by his ſermons; yet his preaching had the ſame return and entertainment that ours has

has now: And Hoſea called his hearers to the Moſt High, yet none at all would exalt him. It was their work to ſtretch out their hands all the day long, but the people hardened their necks and refuſed to return, Jer. xiii. and Zech. vii. But, *5thly*, Conſider all theſe were God's ſervants and preachers under the Old Teſtament; and you may be diſpoſed to think, that under the goſpel, when the veil is laid by, and when Chriſt himſelf, their Lord and maſter, and his apoſtles come to preach the goſpel, it ſhould be otherwiſe; yet John the Baptiſt, who was Chriſt's harbinger, a burning and a ſhining light, a ſtayed and fixed man, not a reed ſhaken with the wind (as many of us are too much) a prophet, yea more than a prophet, yet when he preached, many of his hearers *rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves*, Luke vii. John comes preaching auſterely, and they ſay he hath a devil; and if there was any rejoicing in his light, it was but for a ſeaſon. And Paul, that choſen veſſel, how often was he perſecuted? and he makes the ſame complaint, in the ſame words that Iſaiah does, of his hearers, eſpecially the Jews, Acts xiii. 46. and xxviii. 28. and was conſtrained to tell them, that he and his fellow-preachers behoved to quit them, and betake themſelves to the Gentiles: And how does he complain of the Corinthians and Galatians, and of their being bewitched, and ſuddenly ſeduced and drawn away from the truth and ſimplicity of the goſpel, by ſome ſelf-ſeeking, falſe miniſters, coming with counterfeit glancing among them. We ſhall cloſe this with the conſideration of our Lord Jeſus, who was a nonſuch preacher, of whom it is ſaid, Matth. vii. 22. that *he ſpake with power, and not as the ſcribes:* And Luke iv. when he was opening that ſweet text, Iſa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. it is ſaid, *They all wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth;* and the officers that came to him, ſay, *That never man ſpake as he ſpoke;* and yet his complaint is the ſame, Matth. xxiii.

xxiii. 37. *How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not:* And John i. 11. it is said, *He came to his own, and his own received him not.* Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum were lifted up to heaven by the Lord's preaching to them in person, and yet woe after woe is denounced against them, because they believed not, for all his preaching and miracles: And it is a wonder, if we look through the history of the gospel, how many a sweet sermon he made, and with what weight and power he spoke, and sometimes with tears, and withal backed his word with miracles, that made his hearers acknowledge the finger of God, and yet how few were brought to believe on him? So that he makes this very complaint as Isaiah, John xii. 38. Is it not a wonder, when he and his apostles preached so much, and so long, that the church was so little a flock, and believers so few in number, even after his ascension? Need we any further proof, that the gospel, where it comes, gets but little welcome? The carriage of many among ourselves is a sad proof of it: We are afraid that many of you do not believe to this day, though there hath been amongst you, much, long or many years, powerful preaching of the gospel, but still live without faith, and are perishing.

If this be not enough to clear the *doctrine*, 1. See how Christ speaks of it, Matth. xiii. in the parable of the sower of the seed, where there are three sorts of ground that never bring forth good fruit; and there he speaks, not only of the time of his own personal ministry, but of all other times. 2. Look to the ordinary and daily effect, or rather consequence of this preached gospel, and it will prove the thing. Do not many perish? Do not many croud thick in the broad way that leads to destruction? And but very few fruits of faith appear? Is there not little, lamentably little, of a real change in the way and walk of most to be seen? To clear it yet further, go through the several ranks of persons, that in God's account are unbelievers,

ers, O! there will be exceeding few believers in Chriſt found. *Firſt* then, Conſider the groſly profane, that are never ſo much as civilized. *Secondly*, The ignorant, ſtupid and ſenſeleſs, that never mind their own ſouls, are never afraid of wrath, nor in the leaſt concerned to make their peace with God. *Thirdly*, The earthly-minded, that think of nothing but the world. *Fourthly*, Thoſe of a civil outward carriage, that have ſome good works, and, as they think, good days too, and yet come not near Chriſt to cloſe with him. *Fifthly*, The hypocrites of all ſorts, both the preſuming hypocrites, that will thank God they are better than their neighbours, and yet truſt not to Chriſt, and free grace through him, but ſeek to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, groſs as it is; and the legal hypocrites, that never denied their own righteouſneſs, nor ſubmitted to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. Lay aſide all theſe, I ſay, and we leave it to your own conſciences to judge, how few will be found to have ſaving faith: And therefore I am perſuaded, if there be any truth of God delivered to you, that this is a truth, That though the goſpel be preached to many, yet there are but few hearers that do actually believe in Jeſus Chriſt, to the ſaving of their ſouls.

Uſe 1. The firſt uſe of it is, to beſeech you to let this ſink deep into your mind, as the truth of God, for theſe reaſons; 1. Becauſe it is a moſt uſeful truth; and if it were believed, would make people very watchful over themſelves, and to tremble for fear, leſt they be found among the multitude that believe not, and put them to ſecure their intereſt in God, and not to reſt on a faſhion and form of religion, without obſerving what fruit followeth on the goſpel. Among the many evils that undo multitudes, we think this is not the leaſt, that this truth is never thoroughly fixed in them: They think there are many heathens and Turks without the church, and many groſs ſwearers, drunkards, and other ſuch within it, that will periſh,

but none others, or at leaſt but very few, who among a profeſſing people do periſh; neither can they be induced to think it ſuch a hard matter to find one, or a very few that are believers in a country; ſo that if Iſaiah were now alive to cry, *Who believes our report?* each of them would be ready to anſwer, I believe. 2. Becauſe for as certain and uſeful a truth as this is, yet generally it is not believed: people cannot think that ſo few believe, and that believing is ſo difficult and rare a thing. I would aſk you this queſtion, Was it ever a difficulty to any of you to believe? If not, what is it that makes believing ſo rare? What ſhould move the prophet thus to complain, *Who hath believed our report?* I ſhall briefly give you ſome evidences, that many of you do not really believe this truth. The *firſt* is, That ſo few of you tremble at the word of God: The hiſtorical faith that the devils have makes them tremble; but ye have not even ſo much: This is given as a property of a ſuitable hearer of the goſpel, to whom the Lord will look, Iſa. lxvi. 1, 2. that he is one *who trembles at the word;* but the moſt part of you that hear this goſpel, are like theſe pillars on which this houſe ſtands, who are never ſo much as once moved at the word: Ye either take not faith to be an abſolutely neceſſary thing, and that ye muſt periſh without it, or ye think that the faith ye were born with will do your buſineſs; ye do not believe that ye are naturally under the power of the devil, and led captive by him at his will; and that without holineſs, and a ſpiritual gracious frame and ſtamp on your heart and way, ye ſhall never ſee God: What wonder then that ye come not to reſt on Chriſt, when the very letter of the goſpel is not credited. A *ſecond* evidence is, That there is ſo little preparation made to prevent your eternal hazard: It is ſaid of Noah, Heb. xi. that *Noah being warned of God, prepared an ark;* and this is attributed to his faith. It is not poſſible that ye ſhould live ſo negligently and careleſly, if

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ye believed that the curſe of God were purſuing you, and that ye will be brought to reckon for that which ye have done in the body, and that ye will meet with God as an enemy; if this were believed, though your hearts were harder than they are, it would make you tremble, and bring you to other ſort of thoughts, and more ſerioufneſs. A *third* evidence is, That there is no fruit of faith among many of you: for where it is, it cannot be altogether ſmothered, but will ſhew itſelf one way or other: and if ye will ſtill aſſert your faith, I would ſay to you as James doth to thoſe to whom he writes, *Shew me your faith by your works.* If ye ſay, God knows; I anſwer, That ye ſhall find that to be a truth that he knows, and he will make you know that he does ſo: But, alas! that poor ſhift will not avail you when it comes to the puſh. O try your faith then by your works: ſee what mortification of luſts, what repentance from dead works, what growth in knowledge, what ſhining of holineſs in your converſation, is attained to. Many of you, even as to knowledge, are as if ye lived among Heathens; many of whom have been as free of vice, and more profitable to others, than many of you are, and cared as little for the world as many of you do: How comes it to paſs then that ye have lived as if ye pretended faith, and yet have no fruit? Ye muſt either ſay, that faith is not neceſſary, or that ye may have faith without fruit, for we are ſure your fruit is not the fruit of faith. To live honeſtly as you call it, what is that? There are many Heathens who have gone beyond you in that: we will not ſay that moral honeſty is nothing, but ſure it is not all. All the fruits of mere moral honeſty, are but ſour fruits, that will ſet your teeth on edge: Neither is it your hearing of the word only, but your believing and doing of it, that will profit you. It is very ſad, that moſt plain obvious duties are not at all followed; as, the ſtudying of knowledge: the exerciſing of repentance, one of the very

firſt duties, which is never ſeparated from faith; the humbling of the ſoul before God; the loathing of yourſelves for all ye have done; the love of God, *&c.* for there may be challenges for groſs evils in Heathens: and fear is not repentance, but godly ſorrow that cauſeth repentance, not to be repented of. A *fourth* evidence is, The want of that work of God's Spirit that accompanies faith. Faith is a ſpecial work of the Spirit, and the gracious gift of God; it is wrought by the exceeding mighty power of God, whereby he raiſed Chriſt from the dead, and by that ſame power he worketh in them that believe. Now did ye ever know what this work meant? Did ye ever find it to be a difficult work to believe? Did ye ever know what it was to have the Spirit of God conſtraining your heart to believe? I ſpeak not of any extraordinary thing; but certainly faith is not natural, nor does it come from pure nature; and wherever it is, it manifeſts itſelf by works, and evidenceth the power of the Spirit in the working thereof. There are ſad evidences of bitter fruits that ſpring from this root, to wit, People's being ſtrangers to the experimental knowledge of the work of faith: As, 1. When men know no more difficulty to get Chriſt, and to reſt on Chriſt, than to believe a ſtory of Wallace, or of Julius Cæſar. 2. When people ſay that they believed all their days, and believed always ſince ever they knew good from ill; and though their faith be no true ſaving faith, but a fancy, yet they will not quit it, and it is impoſſible for men to get them convinced that they want faith. 3. When men never knew what it is to be without faith: it is one of the great works of the Spirit, John xvi. 8. to convince us of the want of faith. Men, without the ſpecial work of the Spirit, will be eaſily convinced, that breach of the ſabbath, that ſtealing, that bearing falſe witneſs, *&c.* are ſins; but how many of you have been convinced of the want of faith? we are conſtrained to ſay this ſad word

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when we look on this text, that it is lamentably fulfilled in your eyes, and even in this our congregation. Think not that we wrong such of you who have believed our report: Ah! it is few, even very few of you, that receive and believe this gospel.

Use 2. The second use is for conviction. If it be ordinary for the greatest part of the hearers of the gospel not to believe, let it sink in your hearts that it is no extraordinary thing that hath befallen you: Are ye not such hearers as many of those were who heard Isaiah and Jesus Christ? And if so, will not this follow, that there are many, yea, even the throng of the hearers of the gospel that believe not? And who, if Christ were gathering sinners by this gospel, would not be gathered? If, where the gospel comes, many do not believe; then here in this city, where the gospel is preached to a great multitude of professing members of the visible church, there are many that do not believe. Or let me ask you a reason why ye do except yourselves; either this truth holds not so universally, or many of you must fall under it, or else give a reason why you fall not under it. The truth which Isaiah preached hath been preached to you, and yet ye remain unbelieving, and despisers of the invitation to the marriage of the king's son, as the Jews did. We are not now speaking of Jews, Turks, nor Heathens, nor of the churches in general, nor of other congregations, but of you in Glasgow, that have this gospel preached amongst you; and we say of you, that there are few that believe our report. Think it not our word, the application flows natively from the text; not from the necessity of the thing, but from the ordinary course of men's corruption. Are not the same evidences of the want of faith, which we spoke of, amongst you? How many are there in their life profane? How many rest on civility and formality? Is there not as little repentance now, as was in Isaiah's time? As little denying of our own righteousness, and making

making uſe of Chriſt's, though the word be taught by line upon line, here a little and there a little? Perhaps, though ye think that the doctrine is true in the general, ye will not, ye cannot digeſt the application, that among ſo many of you viſible profeſſors of faith, there are but few real believers: Therefore we ſhall follow the conviction a little further, by giving you ſome conſiderations to make it out, that we have but too juſt ground to make application of the doctrine to you, eſpecially conſidering the abounding corruption that is amongſt you, that ye may be put to fear the wrath that attends ſin, and to flee to Chriſt for refuge in time. 1. Conſider of whom it is that the prophet is ſpeaking, and of what time; is it not the times and days of the goſpel? Had not the Spirit (in dictating this text of ſcripture) an eye on Scotland, and on Glaſgow? And do not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt and Paul apply it in their days? And why then may not we alſo in ours? and when the Spirit ſpeaks expreſly of the laſt times, that they ſhall be perilous, and of the falling away of many, ſhould it not give us the greater alarm. 2. Do not all things agree to us as to them? Is not the goſpel the ſame? Is our preaching any better than theirs? Nay, had they not much more powerful preaching? And if that preaching, which was moſt powerful, had not efficacy as to many to work faith in them, what may we expect to do by our preaching? Are not your hearts as deceitful? Are not your corruptions as ſtrong? Are ye not as bent to backſliding as they were? What ſort of people were they that were unfruitful hearers? Were they not members of the viſible church as ye are? circumciſed under the Old Teſtament, as ye are baptized under the New? Was it not thoſe who had Chriſt and his apoſtles preaching to them? Yea, they were not among the more ignorant ſort who did not believe, but ſcribes and Phariſees; and thoſe not of the profaneſt ſort only, but ſuch as came to church, and attended on

on ordinances, as ye do; yea, were such as had gifts, and cast out devils, and preached in Christ's name, as you may see, Luke xiii. 6. Now when there are so many, and of such rank, who get no good of the word, and of such, a great many that will seek to enter, and shall not be able, to whom Christ will say, *Depart, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity.* What can be the reason that many of you do so confidently assert your faith, when there are scarcely any characters of unbelief but ye have them? Or, what can be your advantage in keeping yourselves carnally secure, when the strong man in the mean time is in the house? and to shut your eyes, and make your necks stiff, and to resolve, as it were, not only to lie still, but to die in your unbelief. I persuade myself, that many of you, ere long, will be made to wonder, that ever ye thought yourselves believers; and will be galled when ye think upon it, that whatever was said to you, ye would needs maintain your presumptuous faith. When we bid you suffer the conviction to sink, let none put it from themselves to others, but let every one take it home to himself; although we would not have any of you cast loose what is indeed made fast and well-secured, nor overturn a slender and weak building, though it were, to speak so, but of two stones height, if it be founded on a right foundation, on the rock; but we speak to you that cannot be brought to suspect yourselves, when ye have just reason to do so. Sure this challenge and charge belongs to some, yea to many, and we would ask what ground have ye to shift it? How can ye prove your faith more than others that have none at all? that ye hope ye have faith, will not do your business, that is no solid proof: Ye cannot come to Christ, except made suitably sensible of your distance, and of that ye have never been convinced as yet. Do ye think to cast yourselves on Christ sleeping, and ye know not how? certainly when the pins of your tabernacle come to be loosed,

looſed, ye ſhall find that your fancied faith will not be able to keep out a challenge. Ye could never endure to think yourſelves to be Chriſt's enemies, or that ye wanted faith; but when death comes, conſcience will awake, and the challenge will get in upon you whether ye will or not. Many of you think that ye are wronged, when your faith is queſtioned or reproved, as if it were an odd and rare thing to be graceleſs, or to be members of the viſible church, and yet want faith; and it irritates you to be expoſtulated with in private for your unbelief: But ſuffer this word now to take hold of you, I beſeech you; and if ye could once be brought to ſuſpect yourſelves, and to think thus with yourſelves, what if I be one of thoſe many that believe not? I fear I be in hazard to be miſtaken about my faith; and from that, put on to ſee how ye will be able to ward off the challenge, and to prove your faith to be ſound, we would think ye were far advanced. O if ye had the faith of this truth, that among the many hearers of the goſpel, there are but few that believe, and were brought thereby to examine and try yourſelves. There is no truth that Chriſt inſiſts on more than this, That ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way to heaven, and that but few find it, and that there are few that believe, and few that be ſaved. If ye did once in earneſt look on yourſelves as in hazard, and were brought to reflect on matters betwixt God and you, it might be, the Lord would follow the conviction; we deſire him to do it; and to him be praiſe.

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SERMON VII.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IT is a ſad matter, and much to be lamented, when the carrying of ſuch good news, as is the report of Jeſus Chriſt in the goſpel, becomes unprofitable to them that hear it, and thereby burdenſome to them that carry it. Men would think, that ſuch glad tidings as make the heavenly hoſt of angels to ſing, would be very joyful and welcome news to ſinners, and alſo moſt encouraging to them that carry it; and where the former is, there the latter will be alſo: Where the word becomes uſeleſs and unprofitable to hearers, it is burdenſome, as to the concomitant and effect, to honeſt miniſters that ſpeak it. Though Iſaiah brought this news in a very plain, powerful, pleaſant, and ſweet manner to the people he preached to, and that frequently, yet in the midſt of his ſweet propheſies he breaks out with this complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* He is carrying glad tidings, yet taking a view of the unbelief of his hearers now and then, he complains of it to God in his own name, and in the name of all the miniſters of the goſpel that ſhould come after him.

We ſhewed you, that it was a very ordinary thing, where the goſpel comes in greateſt plenty and power, for the hearers thereof to meet it with much unbelief; a truth that was verified in Iſaiah's time, and that he

foreſaw would be verified in the days of the goſpel, and therefore it is our report; not only is it the report of Iſaiah, but it is the report of Chriſt and of Paul, who make the ſame complaint, and quote the ſame words of Iſaiah: And need we doubt of the truth of it, when Iſaiah in the Old, and Paul in the New Teſtament, thus complain? Not to ſpeak of their, and our Lord and Maſter, who *came to his own, and his own received him not;* and of whom when he came, they ſaid, *This is the heir, come, let us kill him.* Need we, I ſay, doubt of the truth of the doctrine, or to think it ſtrange to ſee it ſo in our time, and that we have the ſame complaint, when the means (at leaſt the inſtruments) are incomparably far below what they were then, though it be ſtill the ſame goſpel?

The prophet's ſcope is, to give advertiſement and warning to the hearers of the goſpel for the time to come of this common evil, even the abounding of unbelief in them that hear it. 1. That he may prevent the ſcandal of the unfruitfulneſs of the word where it comes. 2. That he may add a ſpur of excitement to the hearers of the goſpel to endeavour to make uſe of it, and not to reſt upon means, how powerful and lively ſoever they be, but to preſs forward to the end they aim and ſhoot at. 3. That he may put men to the trial, and that they may be brought to look in upon themſelves, whether they be or be not in this black roll of them that receive not the report: And we think, if any thing put men to be ſuſpicious of themſelves, and to commune with their own hearts about their ſoul's ſtate, this ſhould do it; eſpecially when they all conſider how this evil agrees to all times, and yet more eſpecially to the times of the goſpel, and how it is an evil that abounds, not only among the profane, but among thoſe who are civil and zealous too for the righteouſneſs of the law, it ſhould make them put themſelves to the trial, and not to take every thing to be faith that they fancy to be ſo; for either this

this doctrine is not true, that wherever the gospel comes it meets with unbelief in most part of its hearers, and cannot be applied to this generation, or that there is much faith in this generation that we live in that will not be counted saving faith. If all of you were believers, there were no ground for this complaint; and if we take peoples own word, we can hardly get a person but will say he believes: So that the generality of mens hearts run quite contrary to this truth; and therefore we say, it is the scope of this doctrine to give people the alarm, and to put them to suspect and try themselves: I do not mean that any should doubt the work of faith where it is indeed, for that is also a part of our unbelief; and, ordinarily, when unbelief fails on the one side, the devil makes it up on the other, and makes tender souls question their faith when they begin to believe, as if they could mend unbelief with unbelief: But it is to such that we speak, who cannot be brought to suspect their faith. Certainly ye will wonder one day, that ye should have heard such a plain truth, and yet would not so much as ask your own hearts whether there was reason to suspect your want of faith; as it is said, that Christ marvelled at their unbelief who heard him, so may we at yours, and ere long ye shall also marvel at yourselves on this account.

Before we prosecute this use, and the rest any further, we shall speak to another doctrine, and it is the last that flows from these words, tending to the same scope to make us aware of unbelief, which the prophet makes such a heavy ground of complaint. The doctrine then is, That if there were never so many under unbelief, and never so many who refuse to receive Jesus Christ, yet unbelief is a sin, and a most dreadful sin; which, though people had no more, will seclude them from heaven. There were no ground for this complaint, if it were not so; even as the prophet would have had no ground to complain of

the peoples unbelief, if there were not many unbelievers. So unbelief is a very great sin in whomsoever it is, and makes them exceeding sinful: or take the doctrine thus, It is a very great sin for a people to whom Christ is offered in this gospel, not to receive him, and rest upon him for salvation, as he is offered to them therein; and it ariseth from this ground, that where Christ is not received, there the ministers of the gospel have ground of complaint, for it supposes a great defect in their duty, seeing it is their duty to believe; yea, the great gospel-duty on which all other duties hang, and which is called for by many ties and obligations: *This is his commandment* (saith John in his first epistle, chap. iii. 23.) *that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ;* therefore it must be a great sin not to believe.

There are, in short, three things comprehended in this doctrine (speaking of unbelief, not only as opposite to historical faith, which we commonly call *infidelity*, but as it is opposite to saving faith, which is that which is called for here) 1. That unbelief, or not receiving of Christ, is a sin, or a thing in its own nature sinful: It is a sin, as well as adultery, murder, stealing, lying, sabbath-breaking, &c. Yea, and in the aggravations of it, a sin beyond these. It is as contrary to the word and will of God, and is as contrary to the Divine Majesty, as drunkenness, murder, adultery, or any other sin; the positive command of believing being as peremptory, plain and particular, as these negative ones are, the breach of it must be as sinful. 2. That there is such a kind of sin as unbelief, besides other sins, and such a distinct duty as believing, that if men could do all other duties, if this duty of believing be wanting, they will be still sinful, and there will be still ground of complaint: And if faith be a particular duty required, and distinct from other duties and graces, as it is clear it is, Gal. v. 21. then unbelief must be a particular sin, distinct from other

other ſins, though it hath influence on other ſins, as faith hath on other duties. So Rev. xxi. 8. it is ranked among the moſt abominable ſins. The reaſon why we mark this is, becauſe there may be ſome in whom ſome groſs ſins, as adultery, bloodſhed, and the like, do reign, and they get that name to be called adulterers, murderers, *&c.* others may poſſibly be free of theſe, who yet have unbelief reigning in them, and therefore they get that name to be called unbelievers, and are ranked with the groſſeſt of evil-doers. 3. That even many in the times wherein the ſcriptures were written, and in every age ſince, are found guilty of this ſin, and condemned for it, who are, as to ſeveral other things, commended. Hence it is ſaid, Rom. x. 3. of the Jews, that *they had a zeal of God*, which in itſelf is good, *though not according to knowledge*, yet it was their main lett and obſtruction in the way to life, *That being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, they went about to eſtabliſh their own:* For as much zeal as they had for the law of Moſes, ſeeing they did not receive Jeſus Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs by faith, it made any other good thing they had unacceptable: And the reaſon why we mark this is, that people may ſee that it is not only for groſs ſins, and with groſs ſinners, that the goſpel complains and expoſtulates, but it is alſo for not ſubmitting unto, and not receiving the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and therefore ye are far miſtaken, that think yourſelves free from juſt grounds of challenge, becauſe, forſooth, ye are free of murder, adultery, drunkenneſs, and the like. Do ye not conſider, that unbelievers are in the ſame rank and roll with abominable whoremongers, ſorcerers, idolaters and dogs? And is not unbelief contrary to the command of God, as well as murder, adultery, and theſe other groſs ſins? And therefore people think little of unbelief, though it be very common, if they be free of other groſs ſins. 4. We ſhall add a fourth thing which the doctrine implies, That unbelief, tho' there

there were no other ſin, is exceeding ſinful; and is, *Firſt*, The great ground that makes God expoſtulate with the hearers of the goſpel, and that makes them fall under the complaint, John v. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life;* and Mat. xxiii. 37. *How often would I have gathered you, and ye would not.* And for ſubſtance, it is the Lord's great complaint of moſt of his profeſſing people; Pſal. lxxxi. 11. *I am the Lord thy God, open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it; but my people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me;* and then follows, *O that my people had hearkened unto my voice.* There is no ſin the Lord complains more of than this, and it is the great complaint of all his ſervants. *Secondly*, Behold how the Lord threatens this ſin, and puniſhes for it; ſee Pſalm xcv. 7. and Heb. iii. 7. and Heb. iv. 8. where he ſwears in his wrath againſt unbelievers, that they ſhall not enter into his reſt. Adultery and murder do not more certainly keep men from heaven than this of unbelief, yea they are joined together, Rev. xxi. 8. ſee alſo, Luke xii. 46. where the ſevereſt judgment that is executed is upon unbelievers; and in the man that had the offer of Chriſt, and did not receive it, and put on the wedding-garment, Matth. xxii. 12, 13. ſee it alſo in the words that are pronounced againſt Chorazin, Bethſaida and Capernaum, Matth. xi. and our bleſſed Lord Jeſus loves not, to ſpeak ſo, to pronounce woes, but to bleſs his people; yet when they have the offer of life through him, and will not receive it, he pronounces woe after woe upon them, and of what ſort were they? even beyond theſe that came upon Tyrus and Sidon, upon Sodom and Gomorrah: We think ſuch threatnings as theſe ſhould make people not to think unbelief a light or little ſin; or, that there is any ground of quietneſs, ſo long as they are in a ſelf-righteous condition, and have not their peace made with God through Chriſt. *Thirdly*, Look further, to the greatneſs of this ſin in the

the ſtrange names that the Lord puts upon it, 1 John v. 11. *He that believes not, hath made God a liar:* And is there any ſin that hath a groſſer name or effect than this? for it receives not the report which he hath given of his Son: he tells people that happineſs is to be gotten in him only, and they think to be happy though they take another way; they believe not the report, for if they believed it, they would receive Chriſt as their life: ſee further what names are given to it, Heb. vi. 6. and Heb. x. 20. which though they be there given, with other aggravations of ſinning *wilfully, with deſpite*, &c. with reſpect to the unpardonable ſin, yet who are they that live under the goſpel and believe not, but in a great meaſure they will be found capable of moſt of them at leaſt? *It is called a crucifying of the Son of God afreſh, a putting him to open ſhame*, &c. And who are they that do this, and on what ground? It is unbelievers, through their unbelief: They think not Chriſt worth the having, and reject all that is ſpoken of him, and cry *away with him*, as the Jews did: And as to their particular guilt, they crucify him; for they cannot refuſe him, without affronting him; and can there be a greater affront to him, than, when he condeſcends ſo very low, to think ſo little of him? *Fourthly*, Conſider the expreſſions under which he ſets out his being affected, to ſay ſo, with this ſin: he was ſo affected with it, Mark iii. 5. that it is ſaid, *He was grieved for their unbelief.* He had many ſorrows and griefs, and ſuffered many things, but this grieved him ſome way more than all: and it is ſaid, Mark vi. 6. that *He marvelled becauſe of their unbelief:* It is not ſaid, that he marvelled at their adulteries, and their groſs ſins; but that when he was taking ſuch a convincing way to demonſtrate to them his Godhead, yet they would not believe on him, he marvelled at that. So Luke xix. 41. it is ſaid, that when he came near to Jeruſalem he weeped over it; and why? the following

ing words tells us, *O that thou hadſt known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace!* That is, O that thou hadſt believed, and received the goſpel, at leaſt in this thy day, (though thou didſt it not before) when thou waſt, and art ſo plainly and powerfully called to this duty! And ye may know that it behoved to be ſome great thing that made him to weep, when all that the devil and Pontius Pilate, and the Jews could do, made him not to weep. It is ſaid, Matth. xi. that he upbraided thoſe cities that he had preached much in on this ground: Sure when he that gives liberally, and upbraids none, does upbraid for this ſin, it ſhews how much he was preſſed with it. And Luke xiv. 21. it is ſaid of this ſin, that it *angered* him, and he is not eaſily angered: ſinners need not fear to anger him by coming to him, but when they come not, he is angry. It is ſaid, Matth. xxii. 7. he was *wroth* at this ſin: and it is on this ground that, Pſal. ii. 12. we are bidden, *Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry;* that is, to exerciſe faith in him; for if we do it not, he will be angry, and we ſhall periſh. There are other aggravations of this ſin, which we leave till we come to the application.

Uſe 1. Is there not as much here, though people had no more but their unbelief, as may make them know it is an evil and bitter thing, and as may make them ſcare at it, and flee from it, and to fear, leſt they be found under the guilt of it, when called to a reckoning, eſpecially when unbelief is ſo common, that few ſuſpect themſelves or fear it: There is hardly any ill but ye will ſooner confeſs, than with this of unbelief; and there is no duty nor grace that ye more readily think ye perform and have, than this of faith, and it is come to that height, that people think they believe always, and know not what it is to miſbelieve. Do ye think that this preſumptuous and fancied faith will be counted for faith? Or that Chriſt, who ſifts faith narrowly, will let it paſs for ſaving faith? No, certainly.

Uſe

Use 2. Is there not here ground of advertisement, awakening, rousing, and alarm to many, that think themselves free of other sins? If the Spirit were coming powerfully to convince of sin, it would be of this, *Because they believe not*, as it is, John xvi. 9. and we are persuaded many of you have need of this conviction, that never once question your having of faith, or care not whether ye have it or not. Put these two doctrines together, That unbelief is an abominable sin, and that it is notwithstanding a very common sin, and let them sink deep into your hearts, and they will give you other thoughts; if this plain truth of God prevail not with you, we know not what will: But the time cometh when ye shall be undeniably convinced of both, that unbelief is a great sin, and that it is a very common sin; and of this also, that it is an abominable and loathsome thing, and very prejudicial and hurtful to you.

Use 3. For a third use, if it be so, let us ask this question, How comes it to pass that so many in trying their state, and in grounding of it, lay so little weight on faith, and think so little of unbelief? I am speaking to the generality of you, and let not others wrong themselves, nor mistake the intent of this scripture. How is it, I say, that the generality of you that hear this gospel, come under this common and epidemick temper, or rather distemper, to maintain your peace and confidence, when ye can, in the mean time, give so little proof of it? Think ye that faith cannot be missing or mistaken, that it is ordinary and common, or that it is indifferent, whether ye have it or not? We are persuaded that many of you think, that if ye had a good mind, as ye call it, and a square, civil, honest walk, and keep still your good hope, that all will be well; ye never doubt, nor question whether ye have received Christ or not: But if unbelief lie in your bosom, (I mean not doubting-desperation, or questioning of the Godhead, but the not re-

ceiving of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs) though ye had more than ordinary hypocrites have, ye will for this ſin of unbelief find yourſelves under the ſtanding curſe of God; for our Lord ſays, John iii. 18. *He that believes not is condemned already;* and ver. 36. *The wrath of God abideth on him.*

In preſſing of this *uſe*, I ſhall ſhew, by a few aggravations of this ſin, why the Lord layeth ſo much weight upon it; and that, not ſo much as it oppoſeth faith, as it is a condition of the covenant of grace, and a means to unite us to Chriſt, but mainly as it is a ſin thwarting his command: And, 1. It thwarteth with both the law and the goſpel; it thwarteth with the commands of the firſt table, and ſo is a greater ſin than murder or adultery, nay than Sodomy, tho' theſe be great, vile, and abominable ſins; which may be thought ſtrange, yet it is true, it makes the perſon guilty of it, more vile before God than a Pagan-ſodomite; the nature of the ſin being more heinous, as being againſt the firſt table of the law in both the firſt and ſecond commands thereof, it being by faith in God that we make God our God, and worſhip God in Chriſt acceptably. Next, It is not only a ſin againſt the law, but a ſin againſt the goſpel, and the prime flower, to ſpeak ſo, of the goſpel; it comes in contradiction to the very deſign of the goſpel, which is to manifeſt the glory of the grace of God, in bringing ſinners to believe on Chriſt, and to be ſaved thro' him; but he can do no great things of this ſort amongſt unbelieving people, becauſe of their unbelief: It bindeth up his hands, as it were, to ſpeak ſo with reverence, that he cannot do them a good turn. 2. It ſtrikes more directly againſt the honour of God, and of the Mediator, and doth more prejudice to the miniſtry of the goſpel, and cauſeth greater deſtruction of ſouls than any other ſin: It is poſſible, notwithſtanding other ſins, that Chriſt may have ſatisfaction for the travel of his ſoul, and there may be a relation

bound

bound up betwixt him and ſinners notwithſtanding them; but if this ſin of unbelief were univerſal, he ſhould never get a ſoul to heaven. The ſalvation of ſouls is called, *The pleaſure of the Lord;* but this obſtructs it, and cloſeth the door betwixt ſinners and acceſs to God: It ſtrikes alſo at the main fruit of the miniſtry; it makes them complain to God, that the word they preach is not believed; it fruſtrates the very end of the miniſtry, and it comes neareſt the deſtruction of immortal ſouls: We need not ſay, it brings on, but it holds and keeps the wrath of God on ſinners for ever; *He that believeth* not (as we ſhewed before from, John iii.) *is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.* 3. More particularly, There is nothing in God (even that which is moſt excellent in him, if we may ſpeak ſo, not excepted) but it ſtrikes againſt it; it ſtrikes againſt his grace, and fruſtrates that: When Chriſt is not received, ſome ſort and degree of deſpite is done to the ſpirit of grace; unbelievers thwart him in the way of his grace, and will have no ſpiritual good from him: It comes in oppoſition to his goodneſs; for where unbelief reigns, he hath no acceſs, in a manner, to communicate it: It ſtrikes againſt his faithfulneſs; there is no weight laid on his promiſes, it counts him a liar; in a word, it ſtrikes againſt all his attributes. 4. There is no ſin that hath ſuch a train of ſad conſequences following on it; it is that which keeps all other ſins alive, for none hath victory over any ſin but the believer; the unbeliever lies as a bound ſlave to every ſin, and it is impoſſible to come to the acceptable performance of any duty without faith, for none can come ſuitably to any duty without a promiſe: And can any but a believer comfort himſelf in making uſe of any promiſe?

We ſhall cloſe our diſcourſe, with ſpeaking a word to that which we hinted before, even to let you ſee, not only the commonneſs of unbelievers, but the great

hazard that flows from it, and the exceeding great evil of it: If we be only convinced of the commonneſs of it, it will not much trouble us, except we be alſo convinced, and believe the hazard of it; but if we were convinced of both, through God's bleſſing it might affect us more, and neceſſitate us to make more uſe of Chriſt. You that ſtand yet at a diſtance from Chriſt, can you endure to lie under this great guilt and ground of controverſy that is betwixt him and you? Do ye think it little to venture on his upbraidings and woes, even ſuch woes as are beyond thoſe that came on Sodom, the heavy curſe and malediction of God? And yet we ſay to you who are moſt civil, diſcreet, formal, and blameleſs in your converſation, if there be not a fleeing in earneſt to Chriſt, and an exerciſing of faith on him, the wrath of God not only waits for you, but it abides on you. O tremble at the thoughts of it; it were better to have your head thruſt in the fire, than your ſouls and bodies to be under the wrath and curſe of God for ever. It is not only the ignorant, profane, drunkard, ſwearer, adultery, whoremonger, *&c.* that we have to complain of, and expoſtulate with, but it is the unbeliever; who, though he be lift up to heaven, ſhall be caſt down to the pit of hell. If you aſk, what is all this that we would be at? It is only this in a word, we would have you receive Chriſt: If ye think that unbelief is an exceeding great evil, and that it is an horrible hazardous thing to lie under it, then haſte you out of it to Chriſt; O! haſte, haſte you out of it to Chriſt; kiſs the Son leſt he be angry; embrace him, yield to him; there is no other poſſible way to be free of the evil, or to prevent the hazard.

SER-

SERMON VIII.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IT is a great encouragement and delight to the miniſters of the goſpel, and it is comfortable and refreſhing to hearers, when the meſſage of the goſpel is received, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is welcomed; but on the contrary, it is burdenſome and heavy, when there are few or none that believe and receive the report, when their labour and ſtrength is ſpent in vain, and when all the aſſemblings of them together that hear the word of the goſpel is but a treading of the Lord's courts in vain: If there were no more to prove it, this complaint of Iſaiah, ſpeaking in his own name, and in the names of all the miniſters of the goſpel, is ſufficient; for as comfortable meſſages as he carried, (and he carried as comfortable meſſages as any that we can hear) yet there was a general non-profiting by the word of the goſpel in his mouth. When we meet with ſuch words as theſe, our hearts ſhould tremble, when we conſider how general and common an evil unbelief, and the not receiving of of Chriſt, is, how horrible a ſin, how abominable to God, and how hazardous and deſtructive to ourſelves it is, and how rare a thing it is to ſee or find any number believing and receiving this meſſage of the goſpel.

We ſpoke from theſe words to theſe doctrines; *Firſt*, That where the goſpel comes, it offers Jeſus Chriſt to all that hear it. *Secondly*, That the great thing

thing called for in the hearers of the gospel, is faith in him. *Thirdly*, That, notwithstanding, this unbelief is an exceeding common evil in the hearers of the gospel. *Fourthly*, That it is a very sinful, heavy, and sad thing not to receive Christ, and believe in him, all which are implied in this short, but sad complaint, *Who hath believed our report?*

We shall now prosecute the use and scope of this. The last use was an use of conviction of, and expostulation with, the hearers of the gospel, for their being so fruitless under it, serving to discover a great deceit among hearers, who think they believe, and yet do it not; whence it is that so many are mistaken about their soul's state, and most certainly the generality are mistaken, who live as if believing were a thing common to all professors of faith, while it is so rare, and there are so very few that believe.

The next use is an use of exhortation, That seeing unbelief is so great an evil, ye would by all means eschew it; and seeing faith is the only way to receive Christ, and to come at life through him, ye would seek after it, to prevent the evil of unbelief. This is the scope of the words, yea, and of all our preaching that when Christ, and remission of sins through him, is preached to you, ye would by faith receive him, and rest upon him for obtaining right to him and to the promises, and for preventing the threatnings and curses that abide unbelievers. We shall not again repeat what faith is, only in short it comes to this, that seeing Christ hath satisfied justice for sinners, and his satisfaction is offered in the gospel to all that will receive it, even to all the hearers of the gospel, that sinners in the sight and sense of their lost condition would flee into him, receive and rest upon him and his satisfaction, for pardon of sin, and making their peace with God. Is there need of arguments to persuade you to this? If ye be convinced of your sinfulness, and of your lost estate without Christ, and that there

there is a judgment to come, when ſinners muſt appear before him, and be judged according to that which they have done in the body; and if ye have the faith of this, that ſinners that are not found in Chriſt cannot ſtand, (as, by the way, woe to that man that is not found in him, if it were a Paul; for even he, he is only happy by being found in him, not having his own righteouſneſs, but Chriſt's) and withal, that there is no other way to be found in him but by faith, (which is that which Paul hath for his main ſcope, Phil. iii. 9, 10.) then to be found in him by faith ſhould be your main work and ſtudy. This is what we ſhould deſign and endeavour, and to this we have acceſs by the goſpel; and it is, in ſhort, to be denuded of, and denied to our own righteouſneſs, as to any weight we lay upon it for our juſtification before God, and to have no other thing but Chriſt's righteouſneſs offered in the goſpel, and received by faith to reſt upon for juſtification, and making our peace with God. This is it what we command you to flee to, and by all means to ſeek an intereſt in; that when the goſpel makes offer of Chriſt, and righteouſneſs through his ſatisfaction, and commands you to believe in him, when it lays him to your door, to your mouth and heart, that ye would reſt upon him for making your peace, and the bearing of you through in the day of your reckoning before the tribunal of God.

That we may ſpeak the more clearly to this uſe, we ſhall ſhortly ſhew you, 1. What ground a loſt ſinner hath to receive Chriſt, and to truſt to him. 2. What warrants and encouragements a ſinner hath to lean and truſt to this ground. 3. We ſhall remove a doubt or two, that may ſtand in the way of ſinners reſting on this ground. 4. We ſhall give ſome directions to further you to this. And, 5. We ſhall give you ſome characters of one that is tenderly taking this way of believing: and becauſe this is the way of the goſpel,

gospel, and we are sure there is not a word ye have more need of, or that, through the blessing of God, may be more useful; and there is not a word more uncontrovertible, which all of you will assent to the truth of, to wit, That there is a great good in believing, and a great evil in unbelief; we would exhort you the more seriously to lay it to heart. O think not that our coming to speak and hear is for the fashion, but to profit! Lay yourselves therefore open to the exhortation, and let the word of faith sink down into your hearts, considering that there is nothing ye have more need of than of faith, and that ye will not find it safe for you to hazard your souls on your own righteousness, or to appear before God without Christ's righteousness, and that the only way to come by it is faith. This may let you see the necessity of believing; and that it is of concernment to try how it is with you as to that: And therefore again and again, we would exhort you in the fear of God, that ye would not neglect so great a salvation, which through faith is to be obtained, but lay it to heart, as ye would not have all the servants of God, who have preached the gospel to you, complaining of you. It is our bane that we suspect not ourselves; and indeed it is a wonder, that those who have immortal souls, and profess faith in Christ, should yet live so secure, and under so little care, and holy solicitude to know, whether they have believed or not, and should with so little serious concernedness put the matter to a trial: but we proceed to the particulars we proposed to speak to.

And first to this, That ye have a good solid ground to believe on; for clearing of which we would put these three together. 1. The fulness and sufficiency of the Mediator Jesus Christ; in whom all the riches of the gospel are treasured up; in whom, and by whom our happiness comes, and who wants nothing that may fit him to be a Saviour; *Who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.* 2. The good

good order, freeneſs, and fulneſs of the covenant of grace wherein it is tranſacted; that the fulneſs that is in the Mediator Chriſt ſhall be made good to believers in him, and by which loſt ſinners, that by faith flee unto him, have a ſolid right to his ſatisfaction, which will bear them out before God; by which tranſaction, Chriſt's ſatisfaction is made as really theirs, when by faith it is cloſed with, as if they had ſatisfied and paid the price themſelves; 2 Cor. v. 21. *He who knew no ſin was made ſin for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him:* And this conſideration of the legality and order of the covenant ſerves exceedingly to clear our faith as to the ground of it, becauſe by this covenant it is tranſacted and agreed upon, that Chriſt ſhall undergo the penalty, and that the believer in him ſhall be reckoned the righteous perſon: if there be a reality in Chriſt's death and ſatisfaction to juſtice; if he hath undergone the penalty and paid their debt, there is a reality in this tranſaction, as to the making over of what he hath done and ſuffered to believers in him; and the covenant being ſure and firm as to his part, he having confirmed it by his death, it is as ſure and firm as to the benefit of it to the believer in him. 3. The nature of the offer of this grace in the goſpel, and the nature of the goſpel that makes the offer of the fulneſs that is in Chriſt by virtue of the covenant: It is the word of God, and hath his authority, when we preach it according to his command, as really as when he preached it himſelf in Capernaum, or any where elſe, even as the authority of a king is with his ambaſſador, according to that, 2 Cor. v. penult ver. *We are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us*, there is the Father's warrant and name interpoſed; and for the Son's it follows, We pray you, in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God; add to this the nature of the offer, and the terms of it, there is no condition required on our part, as the preciſe condition of the covenant, but be-

lieving. Now when these are conjoined, we put it to your conscience, if ye have not a good ground to trust to, and a sufficient foundation to build on; and if so, it ought to be a powerful attractive motive to draw you to believe in him, and to bring you to rest on him by believing.

Secondly, We have also many warrants and encouragements to step forward, and when Christ in his fulness lays himself before you, to cast yourselves on him, and to yield to him: If we could speak of them suitably, they are such as may remove all doubts that any might have in coming to him, and may serve to leave others inexcusable, and unanswerably to convince them that the main obstruction was in themselves, and that they would not come unto him for life; he called to them, but none would exalt him, 1. Do ye not think that the offer of this gospel is a sufficient warrant and ground of encouragement to believe on him? And if it be so to others, ought it not to be a sufficient warrant and encouragement to you, when he says, Psal. lxxxi. 10. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it?* What excuse can ye have to shift or refuse the offer? If ye think Christ real in his commands, is is he not as real in his offers? 3. He hath so ordered the administration of this gospel, as he hath purposely prevented any ground that we may have of doubting to close with Christ: He hath so qualified the object of this grace in the gospel, that these of all the world that men would think should be secluded, are taken in to be sharers of it; for it is *sinners, lost sinners, self-destroyers, ungodly, the sheep that have wandered, the poor, the needy, the naked, the captives, the prisoners, the blind*, &c. according to that of Isa. lxi. 1, 2. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; he hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek or poor, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound*, &c. and Isa. lv. 1. those who are invited to come to the fair of grace

grace are such as are *thirsty*, and such as *want money;* who among men use to be secluded, but in grace's market they only are welcome; it is to them that grace says, *Ho, come:* and Rev. xxii. 17. *Whosoever will let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* It is not only (to say so with reverence) those whom he willeth, but it is *whosoever will;* and so if thou wilt come, grace puts the offer into thy hand, as it were, to carve on; to let us know, that he allows strong consolation to believers, and that either the hearers of this gospel shall believe, or be left without all excuse; He hath it to say, as it is, Isa. v. *What could I have done to my vineyard that I have not done.* If ye had the offer at your own will, what could ye put more in it? It cannot be more free than *without money*, it cannot be more seriously pressed than with a *Ho*, and *O yes*, to come. Sometimes he complains, as John v. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life;* and sometimes weeps and moans, because sinners will not be gathered, as Luke xix. 41, 42. and Mat. xxiii. 37. Can there be any greater evidences of reality in any offer? A *third* warrant is from the manner and form of Christ's administration: He hath condescended to make a covenant, and many promises to draw people to believe, to which he hath added his oath, swearing by himself, when he had no greater to swear by, for our confirmation and consolation, as in Heb. vi. 16, 17. And among men, ye know, that an oath puts an end to all controversy; and what would ye, or could ye seek more of God, than his saying writing and swearing; He hath done all this, *that the heirs of promise may have strong consolation, who are fled for refuge to the hope set before them.* O! will ye not believe and credit God when he swears? among other aggravations of unbelief this will be one, that by it ye make God not only a liar, but perjured; a heavy, heinous, and horrid guilt in all unbelievers of this gospel. 4. To take away all controversy, he hath interposed his com-

mand, yea it is the great command, and in a manner the one command of the gospel, 1 John iii. 23. *This is his commandment, That ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ;* and therefore the offer of the gospel, and promulgation of it, cometh by way of command, *Ho, come, believe*, &c. whereby the Lord tells the hearers of the gospel, that it is not left to their own choice, or as a thing indifferent to them, to believe or not to believe, but it is laid on them by the necessity of a command to believe; and if ye think ye may and should pray, sanctify the sabbath, or obey any other command, because he bids you, there is the same authority enjoining and commanding you to believe, and as great a necessity lies on you to give obedience to this command as to any other; do not, therefore, think it humility not to do it, for obedience is better than sacrifice.

For your farther encouragement to believe, I would say three words, which ye should also look upon as warrants to believe, and by them know that it is a great sin not to believe. 1. Ye have no less ground or warrant than ever any that went before you had; David, Moses, Paul, &c. had no better warrant; my meaning is, ye have the same covenant, the same word and promises, Christ and his fulness, God and his faithfulness, offered to you, the same warrant that God hath given to all his people since ever he had a church; and do ye not think but it will be a sad and grievous ground of charge against you, when you shall see others that believe on the same grounds that you have, sit down in the kingdom of heaven, and yourselves as proud rebels shut out? Whatever difference there be as to the main work of grace, and of God's Spirit on the heart in the working of faith, yet the ground of faith is the word that all hear who are in the visible church; and you having the same ground and object of faith in your offer, there will be no excuse for you if ye do not believe. A second encouragement

ragement is, That the ground of faith is ſo ſolid and good, that it never diſappoints any one that leans to it; and count the goſpel a mean and inſignificant thing who will, it ſhall have this teſtimony, which damned unbelievers will carry to hell with them, that *it was the power of God to ſalvation to them that believed;* and that there was nothing in the goſpel itſelf that did prejudge them of the good of it, but that they prejudged themſelves who did not truſt to it: therefore the word is called, *Gold tried in the fire;* all the promiſes having a being from Jehovah himſelf, one jot or one tittle of them cannot fail nor fall to the ground. 3. If ye were to carve out a warrant to yourſelves, as I hinted before, what more could ye deſire? What miſs ye in Chriſt? What clauſe can ye deſire to be inſerted in the covenant that is not in it? It contains pardon of ſin. Healing of your backſlidings, and what not? And he hath ſaid, ſealed, and ſworn it, and what more can ye require? Therefore we would again exhort you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, and in his ſtead, not to neglect ſo great a ſalvation. O! receive the grace of God, and let it not be in vain.

In the *third* place; let us ſpeak a word or two to ſome objections or ſcruples, which may be moved in reference to what hath been ſaid. And, *Firſt*, It may be ſome will ſay, That the covenant is not broad enough, becauſe all are not elected, all are not redeemed nor appointed to be heirs of ſalvation; upon which ground, temptations will ſometimes ſo far prevail, as to raiſe up a ſecret enmity at the goſpel: But, 1. How abſurd is this reaſoning? Is there any that can rationally deſire a covenant ſo broad, as to take in all as neceſſarily to be ſaved by it? There is much greater reaſon to wonder that any ſhould be ſaved by it, than there is if all ſhould periſh: beſides we are not now ſpeaking to the effects, but to the nature of the goſpel; ſo that whoever periſh, it is not becauſe they were not elected, but becauſe they believed not; and

and the bargain is not of the leſs worth, nor the leſs ſure, becauſe ſome will not believe; and to ſay, that the covenant is not good enough, becauſe ſo many periſh, is juſt as if ye ſhould ſay, it is not a good bridge becauſe ſome will not uſe it, but adventure to go thro' the water, and ſo drown themſelves. 2. I would aſk, Would you overturn the whole courſe of God's adminiſtration, and of the covenant of his grace? Did he ever *a priori*, or at firſt hand, tell people that they were elected? Who ever got their election at the very firſt revealed to them? Or who are now before the throne that ever made the keeping up of this ſecret from them, a bar or impediment to their believing? God's eternal purpoſe or decree is not the rule of our duty, nor the warrant of our faith, but his revealed will in his word: let us ſeek to come to the knowledge of God' decree of election *a poſteriori*, or by the effects, which is a ſure way of knowledge. Our thwarting his word to know his decree, will not excuſe, but make us more guilty; *He hath ſhewed thee, O man*, (ſaith Micah, chap. vi. 8.) *what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee*, &c. and if any will ſcruple and demur on this ground to cloſe the bargain, let them beware that they provoke him not to bring upon them their own fears, by continuing them in that ſcrupling and demurring condition: Ye cannot poſſibly avoid hazard by only looking on, and not making uſe of Chriſt; therefore do not bring on your own ruin by your fear, which may be by grace prevented, and by this way of believing ſhall be certainly prevented.

But, *Secondly*, Some may object and ſay, I am indeed convinced that believing is my duty, but that being a thing that I cannot do, why therefore ſhould I ſet about it? *Anſw.* 1. This is a moſt unreaſonable and abſurd way of reaſoning, for if it be given way to, what duty ſhould we do? We are not of ourſelves able to pray, praiſe, keep the Lord's-day, nor to do any

any other commanded duty, ſhall we therefore abſtain from all duties? Our ability or fitneſs for duty is not the rule of our duty, but God's command; and we are called to put our hand to duty in the ſenſe of our own inſufficiency, which if we did, we ſhould find it go better with us; and may not the ſame be expected in the matter of believing, as well as in other duties? 2. None that ever heard this goſpel ſhall in the day of judgment have this to object, none ſhall have it to ſay, that they would fain have believed, but their meer infirmity, weakneſs and inability, did hinder them; for though it be our own ſin and guilt that we are unable, yet where the goſpel comes that is not the controverſy, but that people would not come to Chriſt, would not be gathered, that when he would, they would not, for where there is a will, to will and to do go together; but it is enmity at the way of believing, ſecurity, ſtupidity, ſenſeleſſneſs and careleſſneſs of what becomes of the immortal ſoul, that ruins folks; for the ſoul that would fain have Chriſt, ſhall be helped to believe: The reaſon is, Becauſe the nature of the covenant of grace, and of the Mediator thereof, is ſuch, that all to whom he gives to will, he gives them alſo to perform, and his faithfulneſs is engaged ſo to do. It muſt therefore return to one of theſe two, That either ye will not receive him, or elſe ye are willing though weak; and if ye be willing, *Faithful is he that hath called you, who alſo will do it;* but if it halt at your perverſeneſs and wilful refuſal of the offer, there is good reaſon that in God's juſtice ye ſhould never get good of the goſpel; nay, there is never a one to whom the goſpel comes and who doth not believe, but formally, as it were, he paſſeth ſentence on himſelf, as the word is, Acts xiii. 46. you judge yourſelves unworthy of eternal life, which the apoſtle gathers from this, that they did not, neither would accept of Jeſus Chriſt offered to them in the goſpel; as the event is that follows the offer, ſo will the Lord account of your receiving of it.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, As for directions to help and further you to believe, it is not easy, but very difficult to give them, it being impossible to satisfy the curiosity of nature; neither can any directions be prescribed, that, without the special work of God's Spirit, can effectuate the thing; the renewing of the will and the working of faith being effects and fruits of omnipotent grace: Yet because something lies upon all the hearers of the gospel as duty, and it being more suitable and congruous, that in the use of means, that when means are neglected, believing should be attained; and because oftentimes those that desire this question to be answered, to wit, How they may come to believe? are such as have some beginnings of the work of grace and of faith. We shall speak a few words to such as would believe and exercise faith on Jesus Christ: And, 1. People had need to be clear in the common fundamental truths of the gospel; they should know what their natural estate is, what their sin and misery is, and they should know the way how to get out of that state. Ignorance often obstructs us in the way of believing; *How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?* Rom. x. 14. When people believe not, it is as if they had never heard. 2. When ye have attained to the knowledge of the common truths of the gospel, as of your sin and misery, the nature of the covenant, the Mediator and his fulness, &c. labour to fix well the historical faith of them: we are sure that many never come this length, to believe the history of the gospel; and till that be done, they can advance no farther; for, as the word is, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him:* I say, these common simple truths of the gospel must be well fixed by an historical faith; and yet this would not be rested on, because though they be excellent truths, yet they may be known and historically believed where saving faith and salvation follow not. 3. Be much in thinking,

thinking, meditating and pondering on theſe things; let them ſink down into your hearts, that the meditation of them may fix the faith of them, and that they may deeply affect us, we ſhould ſeek to have a morally ſerious feeling of them, as we have of the common works of the Spirit; but there are many like the *way-ſide hearers*, who, as ſoon as they hear the word, ſome devil, like a crow, comes and picks it up; therefore to prevent this, ye ſhould ſeek to have the word of God dwelling richly in you, ye ſhould meditate on it till ye be convinced of your hazard, and get your affections ſome way ſtirred, according to the nature of the word ye meditate upon, whether threatnings or promiſes: The moſt part are affected with nothing; they know not what it is to tremble at a threatning, or ſmile, as it were, on a promiſe, through their not meditating on the word, that it may produce ſuch an effect. 4. When this is done, men ſhould fully give up their own righteouſneſs as to their juſtification, that if they cannot ſo poſitively and ſtayedly come to reſt on Jeſus Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, yet they may lay the weight of their peace with God on no other thing; they ſhould lay it down for a certain concluſion, that by the works of the law they can never be juſtified, and ſhould come with their mouths ſtopt as to that matter before God. Thus weak Chriſtians will find it ſometimes eaſier, to give up with the law, than to cloſe with the goſpel, as to their diſtinct apprehenſion of the thing. 5. When this is done, go, as it were, to the top of mount Nebo, and take a look of the pleaſant land of promiſes, and of Chriſt held out in them, and let your ſoul ſay, O! to have the bargain well cloſed, to have my heart ſtirred up to love him, and to reſt upon him; O! to have faith, and to diſcern it in its actings; for when the life of faith is ſo weak that it cannot ſpeak, yet it may breathe; and though ye cannot exerciſe faith as ye would, ſo as to cleave to and catch faſt hold of the

object, yet essay seriously to esteem, love, and vehemently desire it: In this respect the will is said to go before the deed; though as to God's begetting of faith there be a contemporariness of the will and the deed, yet as to our sense the will outruns the deed, even as in another sense the apostle says, *To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I know not;* for we ought to have our will running after Christ, and believing on him, when we cannot attain to the distinct actings of it.

But it may be here objected and said, Is not this presumption? *Answ.* If this were presumption, then all we have said of the warrant of the gospel to believe, is to no purpose: Christ never counted it presumption to desire and endeavour in his own way to believe on him for attaining of life through him: To desire heaven and peace with God, and to neglect Christ and pass him by, were indeed presumption; but it is not so to desire them through him. 6. When ye have attained to this desire in your hearts, if ye cannot distinctly to your satisfaction believe on Christ, ye should firmly resolve to believe and essay it, and say, This is the way I will and must take it, and no other, as David saith, Psalm xvi. 2. *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord:* Hence the exercise of faith is called a *chusing* of God, Deut. xxx. 19. and Josh. xxiv. and seriously, sincerely and firmly to resolve this, is our duty when we can do no more; and it is no little advancement in believing, when such a resolution to believe is deliberately and soberly come to. 7. When this is done people should not hold still, for to resolve and not to set forward will be found to be but an empty resolution; therefore having resolved (though still looking on the resolution as his gift) we should set about to perform and believe as we may; and when we cannot go, we should creep; when we cannot speak words of faith, we should let faith breathe; when it can neither speak nor breathe distinctly,

distinctly, we should let it pant: In a word, to be essaying the exercise of faith, and often renewing our essays; which if we did, we should come better speed in believing than we do. Thus, though ye were under a conviction, that ye could do no more in this than a man whose arm is withered can do to stretch it forth, yet as the man with the withered hand at Christ's word of command to stretch it forth, obeyed and succeeded, or as the disciples, when they had toiled long, even all the night, and caught nothing, yet at Christ's word they let down the net and inclosed a multitude of fishes; so, though ye have essayed to act faith often, and yet come not speed, yet essaying it again on Christ's calling to it, it may, and will through grace go with you. 8. When yet ye come not speed as ye would, your short-coming would be bemoaned and complained of to God, laying open to, and before him the heart, who can change it, and ye would have it for a piece of your weight and burden, that your heart comes not so up to, and abides not so by believing; I would think it a good frame of spirit, when the not having of the heart standing so fixed at believing, is an exercise and a burden. 9. When all this is done, in some measure ye would wait on in doing thus, and would continue in this way, looking to him, who is the author and finisher of faith, for his influence to make it go with you, to look to him to be helped, is the way to be helped to believe, or to pray to him to better and amend faith, is the way to have it bettered and amended; it is said, Psal. xxxiv. 5. *They looked to him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed:* And if it be said, How can one look that sees not? It is true, blind folk cannot look, yet they may essay to look, and though there be but a glimmering, as the looking makes the faculty of seeing the better and more strong, so the exercise of faith makes faith to increase, this is it that the Psalmist hath, Psal. xxx.

verſe laſt. *Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord;* that is, if ye be weak, wait on, and he ſhall ſtrengthen you, believe, and give not over, though to your ſenſe ye come not ſpeed; beginners that are looking conſcientiouſly to their way, though they have but a glimmering weak ſight of Chriſt, and be as the man that at firſt ſaw men walking as trees, yet if they wait on, they may attain to a more cloſe and firm gripping of Chriſt.

We cloſe with this word of advertiſement, That as we ſpeak not of theſe things as being in man's power to be performed, ſo neither can they be gone about to purpoſe, but where there is ſome faith and love; yet when they are at firſt looked on, they are ſome way more within our reach than the diſtinct exerciſe of faith, which is a great myſtery. The Lord bleſs his word and make it uſeful to you.

SERMON IX.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IF folks ſoberly and gravely conſidered of what concernment it is to make uſe of the goſpel, and what depends upon the profitable or unprofitable hearing of it, how ſerious would both ſpeakers and hearers be? This ſame poor, mean and contemptible-like way of ſpeaking or preaching, is the ordinary way that God hath choſen to ſave ſouls, even by the *fooliſhneſs of*

of preaching, as the apoſtle hath it, 1 Cor. i. 22. and where miniſters have been tender, how near hath it lain to their hearts, whether people profited or not: They that will read Iſaiah, how he reſented and complained of it, and how he was weighted with it, will eaſily be induced to think that he was in earneſt and that it was no little matter that made him thus cry out, *Who hath believed our report?*

We ſhewed that four things were comprehended in the words; *Firſt*, That the great errand of miniſters is, to bring the glad tidings of Jeſus Chriſt the Saviour, to ſinners. *Secondly*, That it is the great duty of people to believe and receive the offer of Jeſus Chriſt in the goſpel. *Thirdly*, That it is the great ſin of a people that hear the goſpel, not to believe and receive Jeſus Chriſt when he is offered unto them. The *fourth* and laſt thing which now we are to ſpeak of is, that it is the great and heavy complaint of faithful miniſters of the goſpel, when this good news is not received and welcomed, when they have it to ſay, *Who hath believed our report?* and it is but here one and there one that cloſes with Chriſt.

Conſidering theſe words, as they hold out the prophet's reſentment and complaint, we ſhall from them draw four *obſervations* which we ſhall ſpeak briefly to, and reſerve the uſe and application to the cloſe of all.

Obſerv. 1. The firſt is, That it is meet for, and the duty of a miniſter of the goſpel, to obſerve what fruit and ſucceſs his miniſtry hath among people, and whether they believe or not: Iſaiah ſpeaks not here at random, but from conſideration of the caſe of the people, and obſerving what fruit his miniſtry had among them, we would not have miniſters too curious in this, as to the ſtate of particular perſons, neither would we have them ſelfiſh or anxious in ſeeking any ground of boaſting to themſelves, yet they ſhould ſeek to be ſo far diſtinct and clear about their ſpiritual caſe and condition, as they may know how to ſpeak ſuitably

bly to it, and how to ſpeak of it to God; that they may ſay, as they have ground for it, that in ſuch a place, among ſuch a people, *a great door and effectual was opened unto us*, as the apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. xvi. 8. And in ſuch another place, and among ſuch a people, *Who hath believed our report?* as here the prophet doth. It is ſaid, Luke x. 17. and Mark vi. 30. the diſciples returned, and with joy told Chriſt all that they had done, and how the devils were ſubject to them; they kept an account of what ſucceſs they had in their miniſtry; ſo it is neceſſary that a miniſter obſerve what ſucceſs he hath among a people, that he may know, 1. How to carry before God in reference to them, what to praiſe for, what to lament for, and what to pray for. 2. It is neceſſary as to the people, that he may carry right to them for gaining of ſtrangers to God, and helping forward thoſe who are entered into the way, and that he may know what report to make of them. 3. It is neceſſary for a miniſter himſelf, though not ſimply as to his peace, for that depends on the faithful diſcharge of his office; yet as to his joy and rejoicing, to know when he labours in vain, and when not, among a people.

We would not then have you to think it curioſity, though ſomething be ſaid now and then, and aſked you, that ſome of you may poſſibly think impertinent; for it becomes a phyſician to ſee to know the ſtate and condition of thoſe whom he has under his hand and cure; and ye ſhould not take it ill, though after obſervation, we now and then ſpeak and tell you, what we conceive to be your condition.

Obſerv. 2. The ſecond obſervation is, That it is moſt ſad to a loving miniſter, and will much affect him to ſee and obſerve unbelief and unfruitfulneſs among the people that he preaches the goſpel to. This muſt be a certain and clear truth, if we conſider what it is that put Iſaiah to this, even to cry, *Who hath believed our report?* Though a miniſter ſhould have never

ver ſo great exerciſe of gifts, never ſo much countenance and reſpect among people, if he be affectionate, he will be more grieved and weighed with their unbelief and unfruitfulneſs than with ſtripes and impriſonment, there will be no ſuffering to this in his eſteem, nothing ſo ſad a ground of complaint. This makes the prophet, Mic. vii. 1. to cry, alas and *woe is me, I am as theſe who have gathered the ſummer-fruits, as the grape-gleanings after the vintage, there is no cluſter to eat, the good man is periſhed and there is none upright among men;* and he inſiſts in this complaint. How often was our Lord Jeſus, the moſt excellent and tender preacher that ever preached, put to this complaint? All the affronts and reproaches he met with, grieved him not ſo much as the unbelief and hardneſs of heart that was in the people; it is ſaid, Mark ii. 5. that *he looked round about on them with anger, and was grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts;* and Mark vi. 6. that *he marvelled, becauſe of their unbelief;* yea, it ſo affected him, that (Luke xvii. 42.) it is ſaid, that *when he came near the city he wept over it, ſaying, O that thou hadſt known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace.* There is a fourfold reaſon of this, that hath a fourfold influence on the ſadneſs of a ſerious and tender miniſter of the goſpel. 1. Reſpect to Chriſt Jeſus his Maſter, in whoſe ſtead he comes to beſpeak and woo ſouls to Chriſt. What would an ambaſſador think of perſonal reſpect and honour, if his maſter were reproached, and his meſſage rejected and deſpiſed? And can an honeſt and faithful ambaſſador of Chriſt look on, and his heart not be wounded, to ſee the goſpel fruitleſs; the Lord's pleaſure as it were marred, and the work of gathering in of ſouls obſtructed in his hand, and his Lord and Maſter affronted and ſlighted. 2. The reſpect that a faithful miniſter hath to peoples ſouls, hath influence on this; a tender ſhepherd will watchfully care for, and wiſh the ſheep well, and be much affected when they are in an

an evil condition, and where the relation is of a more ſpiritual nature, and the flock of far, very far greater worth and concernment, what wonder the ſhepherd be more affected? as Paul beſpeaks the Galatians iii. 16. *My little children, of whom I travail again in birth, 'till Chriſt be formed in you;* to be travailing and bringing forth but wind, cannot but prick and wound an honeſt miniſter of the goſpel to the very heart; ſo 2 Cor. xi. 29. Paul ſaith, *Who is offended, and I burn not?* The very hazard of a ſoul, will be like a fire burning the heart that is tender and zealous of the ſpiritual good of ſouls. 3. The reſpect that a faithful miniſter hath to the duty in his hand, hath influence on this; for ſuch an one loves to neat his duty, and to go neatly and lively about it, and the unbelief and unfruitfulneſs of the people clogs him in his duty, and makes him drive heavily; hence it is ſaid, Mat. xiii. 58. and Mark vi. 5. that our Lord *could not do many mighty works there*, or among that people, *becauſe of their unbelief;* unbelief ſtraitens and ſhuts the door, and makes preaching become a very burden to a faithful miniſter; therefore the apoſtle exhorts, Heb. xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and watch for your ſouls, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you;* a neceſſity lies upon miniſters to go about their work, but when the word does no more but buff on them, ſo to ſpeak, it makes them to cry, as this ſame prophet doth, chap. vi. 11. *How long, Lord?* And, *4thly*, This alſo hath influence on their being ſo much weighted, even the concern of honeſt miniſters own joy and comfort; it is true, as we hinted before, that neither a faithful miniſter's peace, nor his reward of grace doth depend on it ſimply, *I have ſpent my ſtrength in vain*, ſays Iſaiah, chap. xlix. 4. *yet my labour is with the Lord, and my reward from my God;* as to that there is no neceſſary connection, and it is of grace it is ſo; yet as to a miniſter's ſatisfaction and joy there is a connection

tion, as we may see, Philip. ii. 16. where Paul saith, *That I may joy in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, and laboured in vain;* and from his expostulation with the Galatians, chap. iv. 9, 10, 11. *I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.*

I shall not prosecute the *use* of this neither; only see here, that it is no marvel though sometimes we be necessitated to complain of you, and to expostulate with you; and considering the case of people generally, if our hearts were suitably tender, it would even make us burst for grief, to see so many sleeping securely and senselessly in their sins, and in that pitiful posture posting to the pit, if God prevent not.

Observ. 3. The third observation is, That a minister may, and sometimes will be put to it to make report to God of what fruit his ministry hath, and sometimes to complain to him of the unbelief and unfruitfulness of the people among whom he hath long preached the gospel; Isaiah, sure, is not carried to this complaint out of hatred to the people, neither from any pleasure he hath in it, nor any delight to tell ill tales of them: The Lord needs no information, yet he complains, and that to the Lord, as we shewed from Rom. x. 16. where it is said, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* So then, prophets and apostles complain of this; it is Ezekiel's complaint no doubt to God, as it was the Lords to him, *This people are a rebellious house, and they will not hear;* and Isaiah speaks here in his own name, and in the name of other ministers of the gospel, that they may join with him in this complaint; and there is reason for it if we consider, 1. The relation that a minister stands in to God, he ought to give an account to him, who gives obedience and who not, and what is done by his embassage, there being no talent given, but a reckoning how it was employed will be called for. 2. The subordination that a minister stands in to Christ, wherein it is requisite he be kept, as know-

ing the work is the Lords and not his, pleads for this, 3. That a minister may be kept from carnalness and vanity on the one hand, and from discouragement on the other, he ought to be acquaint with, and to hold up both the fruitfulness and unfruitfulness of the people to God. 4. It is meet for the good of the people it be so, not to irritate, but kindly to affect the people, that when he complains to God, they may be convinced that it is to get the evil complained of amended, if so it may be.

This complaining will we fear be the result of much preaching among you; for either there must be more faith and fruits, else ye will have the more complainers, and the more complaints against you.

Observ. 4. The fourth observation is, That it is and ought to be a very sad and weighty thing to a minister, and also to a people, when he is put to complain to God of their unbelief amongst whom he is labouring: It is the last thing he hath to do, and he can do no more, and it is the greatest and highest witness and ditty against them, when a minister hath been preaching long, and observing the fruit of his ministry, and is wearied out with their unfruitfulness, and forced to cry, Lord, there are none, or but very few that have believed the report that I have brought to them; it is the heaviest and hardest word that Christ hath to say to Jerusalem, Mat. xxiii. 37. and Luke xix. 31. when he complains of their unfruitfulness, harder and heavier than all the woes he pronounced against the Scribes and Pharisees, on other accounts, and at least equivalent to them pronounced on the same account; for the same woe and wrath follows both; *O!* saith he, *that thou hadst known in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes;* this comes as the last and saddest word, holding out the desperateness of their condition, when the powerful preaching of the gospel hath no gracious force, nor saving effect following it, when direc-

directions prevail not, when no sort of ministerial gifts do a people good, when it comes to that, Mat. xi. 16. *Whereunto shall I liken this generation, it is like children sitting in the market-place crying to their fellows, we have piped to you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented:* When both the sweet offers of grace, and the terrible threatnings of the law, come forth to a people, and both are followed for a long time without fruit, then comes out that word: *Whereunto shall I liken this generation? John came neither eating nor drinking, and ye say, he hath a devil;* his austere way of living and preaching did you no good, ye could not bear with it: *The Son of man came eating and drinking*, in a familiar way, *and ye say, behold a man gluttonous, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners:* They stumble at both unjustly; and so it is even to this day, many stumble at the messenger, cast at the message, and then followeth the sad complaint.

It is meet that now we speak to a word of *use*, but we profess we know not well how to follow it, there is so much ground to complain, and we are not (alas!) suitably sensible of our own unfitness to follow the complaint, which makes us think that it would become another better; but what shall we say? It is the word of the Lord, and it were needful that both you and I should forget and take our eyes off men, and remember that it is the Lord God, and some commissioned from him, that we have to do with, that so we may accept the message. 1. Then we may say that it is no pleasure to us to be hewing you, and speaking sharply to you, (the Lord knows,) would to God there were more that needed healing medicines, and that fewer had need of hewing and wounding; but the truth is, carnal security, spiritual pride, hypocrisy and formality, are so common, and become so much the plague of this generation; that people believe not their hazard. Neither 2. is it our desire nor design

to ſpeak to all of you indifferently, and without diſcrimination; for as the Lord ſaith, Matth. xi. 19. *Wiſdom is juſtified of her children;* though the generality deſpiſe this word, yet we are confident the Lord hath ſome that he allows not to be grieved: And we ſhall deſire, that ſuch may not wrong themſelves, nor mar our freedom in ſpeaking the word of the Lord to others. 3. We ſhall not deſire to ſpeak peremptorily as to the caſe of particular perſons, though we will not deny nor conceal our fears and ſad apprehenſions, as to many of you; only what we have to ſay, we ſhould know and be aſſured that it is not ſpoken at random by us, but as having ſome acquaintance with many of your conditions, and we may gather from thoſe what is very probably the condition of others.

And now as to what we would ſay to you: Some have been preaching this goſpel to you, who are removed to another part of the vineyard; others are gone to another world; and ſome are yet continued preaching to you: But what fruit is brought forth by the miniſtry of all? If we were put to make a report of you, as we will be put to it, what could we ſay? We are afraid to ſpeak our apprehenſions; O! how little is this goſpel, as to its fruit and ſucceſs, upon the growing hand among you? We ſhall therefore forbear to ſpeak of that which we think hath deep impreſſions on ourſelves concerning you, but we would have you to look through matters, how they ſtand betwixt God and you; and, if we may humbly lay claim to any meaſure of the judgment of diſcerning, may we not aſk, where is there a man or woman amongſt moſt of us, that hath a converſation ſuitable to this goſpel? If we begin at the great ones that have the things of the world in abundance, it is their work for moſt part not to be religious, but to gather and heap up riches, and to have ſomewhat of a name, or a piece of credit in the world: this is the fartheſt that many of ſuch deſign. And if we come and take a look

look of the way of the poorer ſort; they live as if they were not called to be exerciſed to godlineſs: And this is the condition of the generality, to live as if God were not to call them to a reckoning; you will ſay, we are poor ignorant folks, and are not book-learned; but have ye not ſouls to be ſaved? And is there any other way to be ſaved than the royal way wherein believers have walked? But if we ſhould yet look a little further; how many are there that have not the very form of godlineſs, who never ſtudied to be Chriſtians, either in your fellowſhip with others, nor when alone, or in your families? There are ſome, O! that I might not ſay, many, who are hearing me, that will not once in a year bow their knee to God in their families; many of you ſpend your time in tipling, jeſting, looſe-ſpeaking, which are not convenient; yea, I dare ſay, there are many that ſpend more time in tipling, jeſting and idle-ſpeaking, than in the duties of religion, either in public or in private; what report ſhall we make of you? ſhall we ſay that ſuch a man ſpent three or four hours every day in going up and down the ſtreets, or in tipling and ſporting, and would not ſpend half an hour of the day on God and his worſhip; and further, how many are yet ignorant of the firſt principles of religion, a fault that is often complained of, and yet we would be aſhamed to have it heard of, that ſuch ignorance ſhould be under half a years preaching of the goſpel, that is in this place under many years preaching it; and even amongſt thoſe who hold their heads very high, and are above others, who can guide and govern their own affairs, and give others good counſel in things concerning the world, yet if we come to ſpeak with them of repentance, or of faith in its exerciſe, of convictions and challenges for ſin, of communion with God, of the working of God's Spirit in the regenerate, or of the fruits of the Spirit, they have not a mouth to ſpeak a word of theſe things; and if they ſpeak any thing,

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O! how little savour and relish is there in it: put them to discourse of religion, they do it without gust or taste, they have no understanding of it; at least experimentally, doth this look like folks that have heard and received the gospel? let me say it the wisdom of this world, and the knowledge of Christ, are far diffent things; and if some of you go that length as to get the questions of the Catechism, which is well done in itself; if we put you but to express them in other words, you cannot do it, which plainly shews that ye are not masters of your knowledge. And what shall we say of others, of whom we cannot say but we get respect enough; yet how do selfishness and worldly mindedness abound in them? And how graceless and Christless are they found to be, when put to the tryal? We will also say to you, that there is great difference betwixt civility and Christianity: civil behaviour will never pass in Christ's account for suitable fruits of the gospel, and will never hinder us from having a just ground of complaint against you: How many have a form of religion, and want the power of it? Who think themselves something, when they are indeed nothing, and their profession is so thin and full of holes, so to speak, that their rottenes and hypocrisy may be seen through it. Though these things be but general, yet they will comprehend a great many of you that are here in this assembly; and if so, is there not just ground of complaint, and expostulation with you, as a people among whom this word hath not suitable fruit. And as for you that live profanely and hypocritically, what shall we say to you? Or how shall we deal with you? We bring the word to you, but ye make no more use of it, than if ye had never heard it: no more religion shews itself in you, than if ye lived among Heathens: Shall we say to God, the fruit of the gospel is there? Dare we be answerable to God, or can we be faithful to you, to flatter you, as if all were well with you? And must not

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our complaint then rather be this, *Lord, they have not believed our report?* Though we be mean, and though there be ground of complaint of us, yet the word is his word, and will take hold of you. I know that people do not readily digeſt ſuch doctrines well; and it may be ſome think that few miniſters are better dealt with than we are: But we ſay, that this is not our complaint I confeſs, if we look from the beginning of the world to this time, there will be few miniſters of the goſpel, found to have been better dealt with, as to outward and civil things: But alas! ſhould that ſtop our mouth? Yea, rather ought it not to be the more ſad to us to be ſo dealt with, and to live in civil love with men and women, who yet do not receive the goſpel, nor deal kindly with our Maſter: Do not think that we will take external reſpect to us for the fruit of the goſpel, as we have no cauſe to complain of other things, ſo let us not be put to complain of this, but receive Chriſt in your heart; let him and his precious wares have a currancy and go off amongſt you; make uſe of him for wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption, and go not only for the faſhion about the means that ſhould bring you near him; but be in good earneſt, and this would ſatisfy us much, and prevent complaints. Laſtly, I would aſk you, what will come of it, if we ſhall go on in preaching, and you in hearing, and yet continue ſtill in unbelief? Will there not be an account demanded of us, and muſt we not make a report? And if ye think we muſt report, can we report any other than really how it is with you? Shall we, or dare we, ſay that ſuch a man was a fine civil man; and therefore he will not be reckoned with, though he believe in Chriſt? No, no, but this muſt be the report that ſuch a man, and ſuch kind of men, though Chriſt was long wooing them, would not embrace him; though he invited them to the wedding, yet they would not come: Nay,

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they mocked and ſpurned at it; they trode the blood of the covenant under foot, and counted God a liar in all his offers; and ſaid by their practice, that they ſhould be happy, though they took not this way: Many of you, who would not take this well, if we ſhould ſpeak this to you in particular, will find it to be a truth one day: And if ye ſhall ſay, What would we be at? The anſwer is at hand, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and ye ſhall be ſaved;* this is the end of the goſpel, and the mean of your happineſs; it is the great and the main thing that we call for, which if it be not obtained, the ground of the complaint will continue: And do you think this any ſtrange, hard or uncouth thing, that when we bring to you the offer of Chriſt in the goſpel, we bid you receive it, and flee in to him to hide you from the wrath to come: and yet this is all we ſeek of you; it is neither your ſhame nor your ſkaith that we ſeek, but that ye may take with your ſin, that ye may judge and condemn yourſelves, that your mouth may be ſtopped before God, and that ye may flee to Jeſus Chriſt in earneſt, and cloſe with him on his own terms; as therefore ye would prevent the greatly aggravated ſin, to wit, ſinning againſt the goſpel and the complaint of the miniſters thereof againſt you, and the terrible vengeance of the Mediator, *kiſs the Son*, caſt open the everlaſting doors of your hearts, and let the goſpel, and Chriſt the King of glory have acceſs: We pray you ſtand not in the way of your own happineſs, refuſe not to do him that much pleaſure and ſatisfaction for all the travel of his ſoul, as to give him your ſouls to be ſaved. Now God himſelf keep you from this folly and ſoul-deſtroying madneſs.

SER-

SERMON X.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

WE have ſpoken ſomewhat theſe days paſt, to ſundry doctrines from this part of the verſe, and particularly of the ſad complaint which Iſaiah hath in his own name, and in the name of all the miniſters of the goſpel, that the ſavoury report concerning Jeſus Chriſt is not received, and that though life and ſalvation through him be offered to many, yet there are but few, ſcarce here one and there one, that do embrace it, this is the ſad reſult, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* words, that being ſpoken by ſuch a prophet, and ſo often mentioned in the New Teſtament, may and ſhould as often as we ſpeak, hear, or read them, put both miniſters and people to a holy demur, and to look what becomes of all our preaching and hearing, when this was all the fruit, even of Iſaiah's preaching, as to the greateſt part of his hearers.

Before we leave this part of the verſe, it will not be unmeet that we ſpeak a little to theſe three things. *Firſt*, To what may be the cauſes why, when the goſpel is powerfully preached, there are ſo few believers. *Secondly*, How it comes to paſs, ſeeing ſo few believe, that generally ſo many think they believe, and ſo few ſuſpect their own faith. And, *Thirdly*, To the neceſſity that lies on the hearers of the goſpel, to enquire at, and try themſelves concerning their faith, and to have ſome ſolid ſatisfaction in it.

Although we mention no particular doctrines now, yet conſidering the doctrines we ſpoke to before, theſe

things will not be unſuitable to them, nor impertinent to you.

For the *firſt*, The cauſes why ſo few believe the goſpel, we cleared to you already. That generally the powerful preaching of the goſpel hath been with little fruit, ſo that Iſaiah hath this ſad complaint, *Lord, Who hath believed our report?* and our Lord Jeſus hath it alſo on the matter, Matth. xi. 17. *We have piped to you and ye have not danced, we have mourned to you and he have not lamented;* and in the ſame expreſs words, John. xii, 38. And when it is ſo with ſweet Iſaiah in the Old Teſtament, and with our bleſſed Lord in the New, that ſpoke with ſuch power and authority, ye may ſee there is reaſon for us to enquire into the cauſes why it is that ſo few believe? in ſpeaking to which. 1. We intend not to touch on all the reaſons that may be gathered together, of peoples not profiting under the goſpel, but of theſe that ye have moſt reaſon to look to, and that are moſt obſtructive of faith in you. 2. Though we might ſpeak of reaſons on the ſide of them that ſpeak to you for *who is ſufficient for theſe things?* and we ſhall not deny but we have culpable acceſſion to your unfruitfulneſs, yet it were not much to your edifying to inſiſt on theſe. 3. Neither will we ſpeak to theſe ſovereign cauſes on God's part, who in his holy juſtice gives up people to unfruitfulneſs, when they receive not the truth in love. Neither *4thly*, Shall we inſiſt on theſe cauſes that may ariſe from the devil, who waits on wherever the word is preached, to mar the fruit of it, as we may ſee, Mat. xiii. 19. the evil ſpirits, like as many crows, when the ſeed of the word is ſown, waiting on to pick it up, and ye would know, that ye never come to hear the word, but there are, as it were, flocks of devils attending you; hence it is that ſome are rocked and lulled aſleep, ſome have their minds filled with worldly thoughts, ſome forget all that they hear ere they go out of doors,

doors, thus it is with many hearers of this gospel, their hearts are trode upon as the way-side by devils and foul-spirits, that never a word takes impression on them, and though ye may think such expressions uncouth-like and strange, yet they are sadly true; Satan waited on when Christ preached, and sure he will fear no more to do so at our preaching than he did at his, if he stood at Joshua's right hand to resist him, he will no doubt be at ours; but, we say, we will not insist on these. But *5thly*, We shall speak a little to these causes that are common in you, which ye yourselves might know, if ye would observe them, and we would exhort you to take notice of them, when we tell you of them.

First, Then we offer, or rather assert this for a cause, the want of serious minding the great concernment of the work of your salvation, and that this preached gospel is the word of the Lord by which ye must be saved; alas! though ye have immortal souls, and though this word be the mean of your salvation, yet there are hundreds of you that never lay it to heart, that your souls are in hazard, and that this word must be it that ye must live by, and live upon; I appeal to your consciences, if ye think upon this seriously; want of this *consideration* fosters security, breeds laziness, and makes and keeps you careless and carnal; I shall instance the want of it in three respects. 1. Look how ye are affected towards this word, and your own edification by it before ye come to hear it, how few are hungering and thirsting, or preparing for benefit by it or preparing to meet with God in it? in effect ye come not with a design to profit; so that if it were known, it would be wondered at, wherefore ye come to hear the word, as Christ says of some, *They came, not because they saw the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled;* so may we say of you, that ye come not to profit by the word, but on some crooked carnal design. 2. Look how ye

carry when ye are come, how many sleep a great part of the sermon? so that it is a shame to look on the face of our meetings, when in every corner some are sleeping, whose consciences God will waken ere long, and the timber and stones of the house will bear witness against them; were you in any other meeting about ordinary business, there would not be such sleeping; but when ye are awaking, what is your carriage? for ye may be awake, and your heart far away, or fast asleep, how seldom can ye give account of what is said? though your bodies be present, your hearts are wandering; ye are like these spoken of, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. *Who sat before the prophet as God's people, but their hearts went after their covetousness;* how often, while ye are sitting here, is your heart away? some in their thoughts running after their trade, some after their merchandise, some after one thing, some after another. This is one sad instance of it, that there are many of you who have had preaching forty or fifty years, that can scarce tell one word of it all; and no wonder; for ye were not attentive in the hearing of it. 3. Look how ye carry after the word is heard; what unedifying discourse will ye be engaged in ere ye be well at the door? How carnally and carelessly do many rush unto, and go away from, hearing of the word! And when ye get a word that meets with your soul's case, do ye go to your knees with it before God, desiring him to breathe upon it, and to keep it warm? Or do ye meditate upon it? Now put these three together, your carriage before, in the time, and after your hearing the word, ye will find that there is just cause to say, that the most part that hear this gospel are not serious; and what wonder then that it does them no good? In the end of that parable of the sower, Mat. xiii. Mark iv. and Luke viii. it is said by the Lord; *Take heed how ye hear; for whosoever hath to him shall be given*, &c. if ye improve well your hearing, ye will still get more; but so long as you take no heed how ye hear, ye cannot profit.

A *second*

A *second* ground or cauſe is this, That the moſt part of hearers never come to look on this word as the word of God, they come never almoſt ſo far as to have an hiſtorical faith of it. It is ſaid, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that ſeek him diligently;* but when men do not really believe that God is, what wonder they ſeek him not, that they fear neither judgment nor hell, and that they ſtudy not holineſs? they ſay in their hearts they ſhall have peace, though they walk in the imagination of their own hearts, and that the way to heaven is not ſo narrow as miniſters ſay it is, that God will not condemn poor chriſtened people; this is the language of many hearts, and of ſome mouths; needs there any evidence of it? If ye believed that the way to heaven is ſo ſtrait, and that holineſs is ſo extenſive, could ye poſſibly with any ſeriouſneſs reflect on your heart and way and not be affrighted? But the truth is, this word gets not leave to ſink in you as the word of God; therefore ſaith our Lord to his diſciples, Luke ix. 44. *Let theſe ſayings ſink into your ears.* There are theſe things, I fear, ye do not believe; and let me not be thought to take on me to judge your conſciences, when there are ſo many *that profeſs they know God, but in works they deny him;* as in Tit. i. 16. when we ſee ſuch things in your carriage, we know that there is a principle of unbelief from whence they ſpring. 1. There are many of you that really believe not there is a God, or that he is ſuch as his word reveals him to be, to wit, holy, juſt, powerful, *&c.* elſe ye durſt not live at enmity with him; *The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God; they are corrupt,* &c. your practical atheiſm and profanity ſay ye believe not there is a God. 2. Ye never believed the corruption of your nature, *Do ye think* (as James beſpeaks theſe he writes to, chap. v. 5) *that the ſcripture ſaith in vain, the ſpirit that is in you luſts to envy?* Ye do not think, that your heart is deceitful and

and desperately wicked? Though we should preach never so much on this subject, yet ye lay it not to heart, ye take it not to you in particular. 3. We are afraid that many of you believe not a judgment, and your particular and personal coming to it; nay, there are among you, who are like to these *mockers* spoken of by Peter in his second epistle ch. iii. *v.* 34. who say, *Where is the promise of his coming?* And as there were in Paul's days some that denied the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. so there are still some who do it on the matter at least; ye have the same corrupt nature. We would think that we had prevailed to some purpose, if ye were brought really to believe, that there is a God, a life to come, and a day of judgment: And if ye did so, ye would be more serious in duty, and would come more hungry and thirsty to the word. 4. The means of salvation is not believed, to wit, That the way to peace with God is faith in Jesus Christ, and that there is no way to heaven, but the way of holiness. If all your thoughts were spoke out, it would be found that ye have another way than faith, and that of holiness; and to make out this, we need go no further than to your practice; we are sure many of you live in profanity, and yet have all a hope of heaven, and what says this? But that ye think not faith and holiness necessary, and that ye may come to heaven another way: This is an old fault and deceit, it was in Moses's days, for some are brought in (Deut. xxix. 19.) saying, *I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my own heart, and add drunkenness to thirst;* though I tipple daily at my stated times, tho' I follow my lusts and pleasures, and take my fill of the world, we cannot be all saints, *&c. The Lord will not spare that man, but his anger and jealousy shall smoak against him, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven;* though this be not now believed, it shall be found verified. There are many,

when

when they come to judgment, that will know to their coſt, the truth of many things they never believed before; as we find in that rich man, who ſays to Abraham, *Send ſome to tell my brethren, that they come not to this place of torment;* it ſays as much, as that he in his life-time did not believe how terrible and tormenting a place hell was, and it is even ſo ſtill; though men and women have immortal ſouls, yet they go on following their ſinful ways, and believe not that any evil ſhall befal them, till God's curſe and vengeance overtake them.

A *third* ground or cauſe is, That men never think themſelves in hazard, nor ſuffer their hazard to affect them, and therefore they ſeek not after the remedy, hence the Jews, Scribes, and Phariſees rejected Chriſt; why? they were righteous perſons, whole and needed not the phyſician; and thus it is with many of you, ye will take with it that ye are ſinners, but not with the gracefulneſs of your nature, and this makes it, that when life and reconciliation with God, are offered, ye have almoſt none to accept of it, why ſo? ye are generally in your opinion, good friends with God already; none of you almoſt think that ye have hatred at God, and ſo ye careleſly and unconcernedly let the opportunity of making your peace with him ſlip over, even like theſe Jews ſpoken of, John viii. 44, 45. who when Chriſt ſaid to them, *ye have the devil to your father*, anſwered, *he had a devil, and that they were come of Abraham, and were not born of fornication;* ſo it is with many of you, ye could never endure to think yourſelves in danger of hell, nor to confeſs that ye were heirs of wrath, as if ye had been born with other natures than the ordinary race of mankind; and this keeps ſo many of you from getting good of this goſpel; for it ſeeks ſinners to pardon them, and enemies to reconcile them; and till the enmity be once confeſſed, the friendſhip will never be ſought after, nor will it find merchants; tho' when once

once the enmity is owned, the gospel hath many sweet, peaceful, and comfortable words to speak to the man afterwards.

A *fourth* ground is, The love of money and of the world, which *is the root of all evil.* This is given as a main cause, Matth. xiii. why the word profits not, *The seed is sown among thorns, and the thorns spring up and choke it, the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word.* 'Tis not oppression, nor stealing, but entanglement with, and addictedness to the things of this present world; folks allowing themselves too much satisfaction in their riches and self, counting themselves as if all were well if they have it, and grieved if they want it; as if there were nothing but that to make happy, being wholly taken up about it, and leaving no room for the concerns of their souls, for prayer, and seeking of God, nor for challenges to work on them, they are so wholly taken up with their callings and business; for they lay it as a ground that they must be rich, and then they give themselves wholly to all things that may contribute to that end, and that chokes and suffocates the word that it never comes up, that nothing comes to perfection; therefore Christ says, Luke xxi. 24. *Take heed ye be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life.* I am afraid that many more among you who are civil, and esteemed virtuous and frugal, shall perish in this pit of worldly-mindedness, than shall perish by drunkenness, gluttony, fornication, or the like; and yet there is nothing more frequent in scripture, than words spoken to turn men from earthly-mindedness, *How hard is it,* says Christ, *for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven?* And such a man is he that is taken up with riches, and places his happiness and contentment in them, whether he have more or less of them. We speak not this to countenance idleness in any, but to press moderation in the use of lawful things. Ye think it enough if we cannot

not charge you with oppreſſion, ſtealing, whoring, and the like; but this goſpel will charge you with the love of money, and if it find the love of the world in you, the love of the Father will not be found in you. Doth not your experience tell you, that it is not an eaſy matter to be much taken up with the world, and to get a ſuitable diſpoſition for duties of religion, and to be painful in them?

A *fifth* ground is, mens little prizing of the goſpel, and the benefits that come by it; they look not upon it as their happineſs to have communion with God; they who are invited to the marriage of the king's ſon, Matt. xxii. will not come, and the reaſon is given, *they made light of it*; the offer of the goſpel hath no weight, it reliſhes not: if a market of fine things at a cheap rate were proclaimed, ye would all run to it; but ye delight not in the word of God, ye prize not the goſpel and the precious wares that it expoſes to ſale among you. And to evince and make out this, I would aſk you theſe few queſtions. And, 1. I would aſk you how often, or rather how ſeldom have you ſat down purpoſely, and thanked God for ſending the goſpel to you? Ye have given thanks for your dinner: but how often have ye given thanks that ye have the goſpel, ſabbath-days, and week-days? 2. How little do many of you wait on the preaching of it? Were there a meſſage ſent to you but from an ordinary man, and more from a great man, ye would ſtraiten yourſelves and your buſineſs too ſomewhat, that ye might hear it; and yet it is a wonder to think how ſome in this place, except on the Sabbath, will hardly be ſeen in the church from one end of the year to the other. 3. Had ye any evidence to draw of houſe or land, ye would ſeek to have it drawn well and ſure; but many of you never ſought to have the evidence of heaven made ſure; ye know, how interruptions of, and threatnings, to remove the preached goſpel from you, never troubled you. That buſineſs of the *tender* gave

a proof, that ye might have your eaſe, and the things of the world, ye cared not what became of the goſpel, and of the liberties of Chriſt's kingdom among you: nay, we may ſay, the goſpel was never leſs ſet by, never more reproached, deſpiſed, and trode upon, than in the time wherein we live, and who lays it to heart? If it were well tried, there is more pains taken on little things in a week, than ye take upon your ſouls in a year; and which may be ſpoken to the ſhame of ſome, more time taken up in tipling, drinking and debauching, than in prayer, or any other religious duty: and is not that an undeniable evidence that ye make light of the goſpel? *They made light of it, and went their ways*, &c. ſaying as it were, care for yonder invitation who will, as for us, we have ſomething elſe to do.

A *ſixth* ground or cauſe, though poſſibly it be not ſo frequent; is a ſhifting off convictions and challenges, a quenching of any begun exerciſe in the conſcience: Some of you have been made ſometimes to tremble as Felix did; but ye ſhifted it, and put it off to another time, and went away to ſome company or recreation, that ſo ye might ſtifle it, and drive it out of your thoughts: Is there any of you who in ſickneſs, or under ſome other ſad croſs, or at a communion, that has not had your own convictions, challenges, and frights, about your ſouls eſtate; and yet ye have ſmothered, extinguiſhed, and put them out again.

A *ſeventh* ground or cauſe (which is as large and comprehenſive as any) is mens reſting and ſitting down, before they have any ſolid ground to reſt upon, taking a counterfeit work for a real one, like theſe ſpoken of Hoſea vii. 16. of whom it is ſaid, *They return, but not to the moſt High:* Some attain to a ſort of out-ſide reformation, and they think on that account they are well enough, and in good terms with God; and when ſuch are called to return, they ſay as theſe do, Mal. iii. 7. *Wherein ſhall we turn?* They think they

they are returned, and that their peace is made already: they cannot endure to be bid believe, or to lay a new foundation, for they think its laid already. In a word, as Laodicea did, *They think themſelves rich and encreaſed in goods*, when yet *they are poor, blind, miſerable, wretched and naked, but they knew not*, &c. and ſo are well ſatisfied with themſelves as gracious perſons, reſting on theſe and the like grounds. As, 1. It may be they pray and think ſomething of that. 2. They think they have faith enough, if they have a hiſtorical faith. 3. It may be they have had ſome reſolutions, and fits of a ſort of tenderneſs; and theſe they reſt upon. We ſhall not inſiſt to ſhew the rottenneſs of theſe props, but ſhall only ſay, it were in ſome reſpect good for many of you, that ye had never had the little pieces of profeſſion ye have: there is a ſort of civil, legal, formal, fair faſhioned men and women among us, whoſe converſation and communication reliſhes to none but themſelves; and ſpeak the word who will, they think that they are without the reach of it: I muſt ſay this ſad word, that I think many of you have as much believing as keeps you from faith in Chriſt; that is, ye have as much preſumption and ſecurity, as makes you that ye are never ſerious with the Lord to amend it, and to bring you indeed to believe; ſo that it is a greater difficulty to beat you off from your rotten grounds, than it is to get you right, though both require the omipotent power of God: ye think ye believe always, and ye have no doubts about it; and therefore ye think ye have faith enough to do your turn. Ah! when will ye know that ſecurity is not faith, and that there is great difference betwixt preſumption and ſolid reſting by faith on Chriſt?

Eightly, This wrongs many of you, that becauſe ye are not among the worſt ſort, and others eſteem well of you, ye think that ye are well enough; and this makes us, that as to many of you, we know not whe-

ther to be more familiar with, or to ſtand at a diſtance from you, becauſe ye are ready to reſt on ſo very ſlender grounds: It is not the commendation of men, but the commendation of God that you ſhould ſeek mainly after; and yet if ye think good men eſteem well of you, ye apprehend ye are good enough. This was it made the fooliſh virgins ſo ſecure, becauſe the wiſe took them and retained them in their company: and this is the neck-break of many, eſpecially when they look about them and obſerve ſome ſin in others which they have to abſtain from; as if it had been enough in Herod, and a ſufficient proof of the reality of his religion, *That he heard John gladly, and did many things on the hearing of him.*

A *ninth* ground (and a very poor one) is folks ſitting down on the means when they have them, as if when they have got the goſpel they were in no hazard, and could believe when they liſt: I make no queſtion, but where the goſpel is in any meaſure powerfully preached, there are many more ſecure and fearleſs than if they had it not; and its very probable ſomewhat of this is hinted at, Luke xiii. 26. where ſome are brought in ſaying to Chriſt, *We have eaten and drunken in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets;* who when he thruſts them away from him at the great day, they will in a manner hardly believe that he is in earneſt; and they give this for the reaſon of it, that they have heard him preach, and they have run out to the fields after him. It were good to fear while ye have the word, leſt ye miſs the fruit of it; compare to this purpoſe, Heb. iii. at the cloſe, with Heb. iv. 1. and we will find this commended to us; *So we ſee*, ſaith the apoſtle, *that they could not enter in becauſe of unbelief, let us therefore fear, leaſt a promiſe being left us of entering into his reſt, any of us ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it:* It is much, yea the firſt ſtep to faith, to get people ſuitably afraid, they miſs the fruit and bleſſing of the ordinances while they have them;

them; it is good to be afraid, to come to church and not to get good of the ſermon; or to go and read a chapter of the Bible and not profit by it, always to put a difference betwixt the ordinance and the bleſſing of it, and to be afraid in the uſe of the ordinances to miſs the bleſſing of them.

There may be many other cauſes, and we ſhould not ſtint and limit you to theſe; but ſure theſe are cauſes why this goſpel profits not. We will add theſe few, 1. There are ſome that ſtumble at the meſſenger, ſome at the meſſage; ſome thought Chriſt a friend of publicans and ſinners, and ſaid he had a Devil; and ſo they ſaid of John Baptiſt. There are ſome that can abide neither free nor fair ſpeaking, and they think it is not the word, but the ſpeaker that they offend at: yet prejudices againſt the carriers of the word have never done good, but much evil, and you would do well to guard againſt them. 2. Sometimes there is a ſtumbling at the ſpiritual truths of the goſpel and a ſort of new fangleneſs in the hearers of it that laſts not; John's hearers *rejoiced in his light for a ſeaſon;* ſomething of it was alſo in Chriſt's hearers, but they ſoon turned their back on him when he told them of eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood, and of the neceſſity of it, elſe they could have no life in them. *This* (ſay they) *is a hard ſaying and who can bear it!* If we would conſider theſe things, we might ſee convincing cauſes of our little thriving, and they might alſo (through God's bleſſing) be made uſe of for directions to thrive; and if we could once bring you to be ſingle and ſerious in hearing, and ſpiritually thrifty, in making uſe of every ſermon and ſabbath for edification, we had gained a great point of you.

SER-

SERMON XI.

Isaiah LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

IF we would ſoberly conſider the frame of the moſt part of men and women that live under the goſpel, it would be hard to know, whether it were more ſtrange that ſo few ſhould receive the report, and be brought to believe for all that can be ſaid of Jeſus Chriſt; or whether that among the generality of hearers that do not receive the report, there are ſo few that will be convinced of their unbelief. Its wonderful and ſtrange to ſee unbelief ſo common, and its as ſtrange and wonderful, that among theſe many unbelievers there are ſo few that think they want faith.

Ye remember the laſt day, we propoſed to anſwer this doubt or queſtion, What can be the reaſon, that when ſo few believe, all almoſt think they believe? And then to ſpeak a word to the laſt *Uſe* that riſes from the matter that formerly we ſpoke of on theſe words. We ſhewed you, and we think the ſcripture is very clear for it, that among the generality that hear the goſpel, they are very rare and few that do believe it; and yet go through them all, there will not one among many be found, but will aſſert they believe, and they will (to ſpeak ſo) be crabbed and picqued, to tell them that they want faith; and ſo the moſt part of hearers live and die in this deluſion; a thing that experience clears as well as the word of God, and a thing that doleful experience will clear at the great day; therefore ſome are brought in, ſaying, Luke xiii. 26. *We have eaten and drunken in thy preſence*

ſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets; to whom Chriſt will ſay, *I know you not, depart from me;* which doth import this much, that ſome will come (as it were) to the very gate of heaven, having no doubt of their faith and intereſt in God, or of their entry into it, and will therefore in a manner plead with Chriſt to be let in, and who would never once doubt of it, nor call it in queſtion, but they were believers, and in friendſhip with him. Although there will be no ſuch debate or diſpute after death, or at the day of judgment, yet it ſays this, that many hearers of the goſpel have drunken in this opinion which goes to death with them, and no preaching will beat them from it, that they are believers, and in good terms with God, till the intimation of the ſentence of condemnation does it, and the wrath and curſe of God meet them in the face. And O, how terrible a diſappointment will ſuch meet with in that day! may it not then very reaſonably and juſtly be enquired, what can be reaſon and cauſe, when this is granted ſo generally to be a truth, that there are few believers, that yet it ſhould be as true, that few queſtion or make any doubt of their faith, and how this comes to paſs? I ſhall give you ſome reaſons of it, which if ye would think upon, and ſuffer to ſink down in your hearts, ye would not marvel that ſo many are under this miſtake and deluſion, and it would put many of you to have quite other thoughts of your own condition than you have. We ſhall only ſpeak to ſuch reaſons as are ſinful, and culpable upon your part.

The reaſons then are theſe. *Firſt*, The moſt part never ſeriouſly think on the matter, whether they believe or not, or they never put their faith to a trial. If the fooliſh virgin lights her lamp, and never looks whether there be oil in it, and takes on a fair outward profeſſion of religion, and never looks what is within it, or how it is lined; to ſpeak ſo, no wonder ſhe goes up and down with the lamp in her hand, and never

never knows whether there be oil in her veſſel or not, ſince ſhe never conſiders, nor puts the matter to proof and trial. The people are expoſtulated with (Iſaiah xliv. from verſe 9. for making of images; that a man ſhould cut down a tree, and with one piece of it ſhould warm himſelf, with another piece of it ſhould bake his bread, and of a third piece ſhould make a god, and fall down and worſhip it; and this is given for the ground of it, v. 18, 19. *They have not known and underſtood, and none conſidereth in his heart;* or, as the word is, *ſeeth to his heart;* they conſider not that that cannot be a god; one would think that natural reaſon might eaſily diſcover this folly. We are perſuaded that ſome of you will think your faith as great a folly, when there ſhall be as clear evidences to prove the rottenneſs of your faith and hope, as there were even to common ſenſe, to prove the image made of a piece of tree, not to be God; when it ſhall be found and declared, that though ye were never convinced of ſin, nor of your miſery and loſt condition, were never humbled nor touched under the kindly ſenſe of it, never fled to Jeſus Chriſt in earneſt, nor never had the exerciſe of grace, yet notwithſtanding the want of all theſe, ye would needs keep up a good opinion of your faith and hope. We ſay, the reaſon why ye entertain this conceit and opinion is, becauſe ye never ſit down ſeriouſly and ſoberly before God to conſider the matter; nor do ye put yourſelves to proof and trial. Let me therefore aſk your conſciences, if ye who have this opinion of your faith, durſt aſſert to him, that this faith of yours is the reſult of your ſerious examination and trial; is it not rather a gueſſing or fanciful opinion that ye believe? And do you think that ſuch a faith as that will abide the trial before God, that never did abide your own trial? It will doubtleſs be a dreadful miſtake, to go off the world with ſuch an opinion of faith, and to have the door ſhut in your very teeth: alas! there will be no mending or better-

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ing of your condition after death: The day comes when many of you, if God graciouſly prevent not, ſhall curſe yourſelves that ever ye ſhould have been ſuch fools as to have truſted your own hearts, or to have taken up this opinion of your faith without ground. We would therefore ſeriouſly recommend to you the putting of your faith more frequently to the trial, and that ye would often read and think on that place, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Examine yourſelves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own ſelves*, &c. O! do not think that a matter of ſuch concernment ſhould be left at a conjecture and utter uncertainty, who loſes, when ye are ſo palpably acceſſary to your own ruin, by not endeavouring to put yourſelves to ſo much as a trial? Do not ſay here for excuſe, *We have no more grace than God gives us;* when ye never endeavoured ſo much as the form of the duty, or to go the length ye might have gone in putting yourſelves to the trial: The deceit then being deſperate and irredeemable, if continued in; do not, for the Lord's ſake, after all that is ſaid to you, continue deceiving yourſelves.

A *ſecond* reaſon is, mens ſetling themſelves on unſound evidences and principles of peace that will not bear them through before God: I do not ſay that they have nothing to ſay in words for themſelves; but that all they have to ſay, will be no ground to prove their faith, or to bear them through before God that they do believe indeed: It will be found at the beſt to be but a lie, as it is ſaid of that man, Iſa. xliv. 20. *A deceived heart hath turned him aſide, he feeds on aſhes, he cannot deliver his ſoul, no ſay, is there not a lie in my right hand?* He may have a ſeeming reaſon for his faith, but it is no reaſon indeed. If many of you were going to die, what reaſon have ye to prove your believing by? Some will ſay, God hath always been good, kind, and gracious to me; I was in many ſtraits and difficulties, and I prayed and had many deliverances. Thus all the ground of thy faith is but

temporal favours or deliveries, which is even as if Israel should have made their receiving of temporal deliverances, and their acknowledging of them, and having some sort of faith of them, to be ground enough to prove their receiving of Jesus Christ savingly. There is a doleful proof of the unsoundness of this ground, Psal. lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37. *When he slew them, then they sought him and returned and enquired early after God; they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer:* They looked to God's past favours for them when they were in the wilderness, and at the red-sea; and they believed that they could do so still: But *they did flatter him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongue; for their hearts were not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant;* whereupon he destroyed them, and through their unbelief they did not enter into God's rest. It is also said a little before in that, Psal. ver. xxxii. *For all this they sinned still.* There may be many temporal favours and deliverances, and these acknowledged too; and yet no receiving of Christ for making our peace with God, for removing the quarrel betwixt him and us, and for making us cease from sin: Consider if it will be a good ground to plead with God upon, to say to him, Lord, thou must bring me to heaven, because I was in sickness, and thou raisedst me up; I was in this and that strait, and under this and that cross, and thou carriedst me through and broughtst me out of it. The Lord will say to such that have no more to say, ye had so many evidences of my power, but ye sinned still; and yet this will be all the pleading and reasoning that will be found with many of you, and the sad reply you will meet with from God.

A *third* reason is, Mens giving an external countenance to ordinances and their formal going about them: They think they have faith, because they keep the church, and are not open contemners and misregarders

garders of ordinances, as some others are, because they pray, read, hear, &c. It seems it was something like this, that the persuasion of those spoken of, Luke xiii. 26. is built upon, *Lord*, say they, *we have heard thee preach, and have eaten and drunken in thy presence:* It is not simply, that they heard Christ preach, for many heard him preach who stoned him; but that when others stoned him, they followed him, and were not only profane, nor professed contemners of him and of his preaching, as these others were; such words fall sometimes from your mouths. Ye will possibly say, what would we have of you? Ye are not profane, ye wait on ordinances, and live like your neighbours; and you content yourselves with that: Alas! this is a poor, yea, a doleful fruit of ordinances, and of your attendance on them: If there be more security, presumption, and desperate hazarding on the wrath of God, and less sense of the quarrel betwixt him and you on that ground.

A *fourth* reason is, Men hope, even such a hope, that contrary to the nature of hope, will make the most part of you ashamed: Ye think ye believe, because ye hope ye believe; and that ye will get mercy, because ye think ye hope in God's mercy; and ye will not believe any thing to the contrary, nor so much as think that ye may be deceived. The opinion that men have of obtaining mercy, that is maintained without any ground but their vain hope, is the most common, most unreasonable, and prejudicial evil among the professors of this gospel: Hence if any ground and evidence of their peace be asked for, they will answer, that they believe; if it be again asked, how know ye that ye believe? They answer, we hope and believe it is so, and can give no ground for it. Many are like these spoken of, Isa. lvii. 10. *Thou hast found the life of thine hand, therefore thou wast not grieved:* They have a faith and a hope of their own making; and this keeps them off, that the word of God takes no

hold on them: We preach that ye are naturally at enmity with God, and offer peace and reconciliation through Jesus Christ; but ye are deaf, for ye think your peace is made already; and but very few are sensible of a quarrel with God, to listen to his word as to the ministry of reconciliation: This is wondered at (in a manner) by the Lord himself, Micah iii. 11. where we have a people whose way is very unlike the gospel; *The heads judge for a reward, and the priests teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord and say, is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us.* It is not for real believing that they are charged, but for their confident asserting their believing when there was no ground for it: So it is with many, they will say, they hope to escape hell, and to have their sins pardoned, and to get to heaven; and they believe it will be so, when in the mean time there is no ground for it, but clear ground to the contrary.

A *fifth* ground is, mens spiritual and practical ignorance of the righteousness of God; whereof the apostle speaking, Rom. x. 3. saith, *Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they go about to establish their own*, &c. that which I mean is, mens being ignorant of their natural condition, of the spiritualness of God's law, what it requires, and of the way of faith, and of the command of believing, and the nature of it: It is from the ignorance of these three, to wit, of the mischief that is in them by nature of the spiritualness of the law, and of the spiritualness of faith, and of the exercise of it, that they sleep on in security, and think they have faith when they have it not; and though sometimes they will say their faith is weak, yet they cannot be beaten from it but that they believe; and their faith rises and falls, as their security does. This the apostle makes clear from his own experience, Rom. vii. 9. where before his conversion he says, he was a living man, but after his conversion he begins

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to think himſelf nothing but a dead and loſt man, the reaſon is, becauſe before converſion he knew not himſelf, he knew not the law, nor the nature of the covenant of grace, *Before the law came*, ſaith he, *I was alive;* he knew not the ſpiritual meaning of it, and therefore he thought he obſerved it, and ſo thought himſelf ſure of heaven, and had no doubts nor diſputings concerning his intereſt in God; *But*, ſaith he, *when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died;* I ſaw myſelf then to be loſt and gone, and in every thing guilty, that which I thought had been humility, I ſaw it to be pride, that which I took for faith, I found it to be preſumption and unbelief, and my holineſs, I found to be hypocriſy; not that his ſin grew more upon him, but the ſin that before was vailed, was now diſcovered, and ſtared him in the face; this is a ſad, yet a moſt real truth; the good believing, as many of you call it, and the faith that ye have, is a ſurer ground of your ſtrangeneſs to God, and of your unbelief, than any other thing ye have can be a ground whereupon to conclude, ye have faith and are good friends with God; ye are yet alive, ſtrangers to God, ſtrangers to yourſelves, ſtrangers to the ſpiritual meaning of the law, and to the exerciſe of faith; if ye would ſet yourſelves to ponder ſeriouſly this one conſideration, I think ye might be ſomewhat convinced of it; Do ye not ſee many that underſtand more of God than ye do, and that are more tender in their walk than ye are, who yet are more loath, ſtraitened, and afraid to aſſert their faith and confidence in God than ye are? and they are oftener brangled and put to queſtion their faith, will ye then conſider what can be the reaſon that ye have ſo ſtrong a faith, that ye never doubted, and they are troubled with doubting ſometimes, yea often, though they pray more, and are more diligent in the uſe of all the means, and holier in their converſation than ye are, and ye will, it may be, ſay, it is well for them that are not like

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ſuch a perſon; this is the reaſon of it, they ſee their ſin, and the ſpiritualneſs of the law, and the nature of faith; and are dead to the law: but ye are yet alive in your own conceit; do ye, or can ye think, that much praying, reading, meditation, and tenderneſs in mens walk, will weaken faith and occaſion doubting? or is it not rather like, that faith will be more confirmed by theſe, than by the neglect of them? How is it then that ye are ſo ſtrong in your faith, when they find themſelves ſo weak and doubting? or have ye an infuſed faith without the means? or doeth God deal with you in a more indulgent way than he uſes to deal with his people? How is it then that theſe of whom ye cannot ſay but they are more tender than ye are, cannot almoſt name faith, or aſſert their confidence in God, without trembling and fear that they preſume; and yet ye dare very confidently aſſert your faith without any heſitation, though ye live carnally and without fear? Do not many of you wonder what ails ſome people, what need they to be ſo much troubled, and why do they ſtand in need of ſome to pray for them, and with them, and to anſwer their doubts, and ye, meanwhile, need no ſuch thing; and all the reaſon is, that ye aſſure yourſelves ye believe, and think the queſtioning of your ſecurity is the very undoing of your faith: God help you, you are in a woful caſe.

A *ſixth* reaſon is, that people drink in ſome carnal principles that have no warrant in the word of God, and accordingly ſquare every thing that comes in their way. 1. They lay it down for a ground, that men ſhould never doubt of God's mercy: We do not ſay that people ſhould doubt of God's being moſt real in his offer of mercy to ſinners in the goſpel; but from that it will not follow that none ſhould doubt of God's love to them, or of their coming to heaven, whether they cloſe with the offer or not. Are there not many whom God curſeth? and ſhould not theſe doubt? A

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ſecond carnal principle is, That there is no ſuch reality in the threatenings of God as there is in his promiſes, as if he were utterly averſe from executing his threats; and as if it were a rare thing for him to condemn any: And is there any thing more oppoſite to ſcripture than this principle? Hath he not ſaid in the ſame place, to wit, Exod. xxxiv. where he proclaims himſelf *to be gracious, merciful, long-ſuffering*, &c. That *he is a God that will not clear the guilty:* And hath not the ſcripture ſaid, that *it is but a remnant that are ſaved;* as it were, here one and there one, and that there are many damned for one that is ſaved: But know it for certain, that he will make you one day vomit up theſe principles, with exquiſite torment, when out of your own mouth he will convince you of your miſtake and deluſion. 3. When people want many things, they think they ſupply all with an honeſt mind: This ſupplies your want of knowledge, your want of faith and repentance, and every thing whereof ye are ſaid to be ſhort: Though ye live and may die carnal and unrenewed, yet ye think ſtill ye have an honeſt mind or heart for all that; and what, I pray, is your honeſt mind, but a rotten and profane heart that vails your hypocriſy with a pretext of honeſty? Would ye think that man honeſt, ſpoke of Iſa. xliv. 19. who with one part of the tree warmed himſelf, and with another part made a God, and fell down and prayed to it? And yet in your ſenſe, he hath an honeſt mind, for he followeth his light which is but darkneſs, and the deceit of his heart carrying him away from God, tho' he cannot ſee it; he diſcerns not, *becauſe he conſiders not that there is a lie in his hand, and that a deceived heart hath led him aſide.* So it is with you; and if many of you ſaw, what is latent under that honeſt mind and heart, there could be nothing that would make you loath yourſelves more. A little time will convince you, that that which ye looked for moſt good from, was your greateſt and moſt traiterous enemy;

my; *He that trusts in his own heart is a fool*, saith Solomon, Prov. xxviii. 26. it supposes that people are ready to trust to their heart, and to hearken to the language of it concerning their spiritual estate, but it says also, that they are fools that do so, for it betrays them, and there is no folly comparable to that whereby a man betrays his own immortal soul; and so he doth who trusts in his own heart.

A *seventh* reason is from the deceitfulness of our heart, and the natural corruption that sticks to us. There is naturally in us pride and self-conceit; we are disposed and given to, any thing that is our own, though it be but a shew, is as good as others reality; to think our own light and knowledge, our own parts and gifts to be as good as those of any others whosoever they be. And with pride there is joined self-love; we cannot abide to think evil of ourselves, or to suspect ourselves: Though this self-love be indeed self-hatred, and is but love to our corruptions, and makes us, when we live in hatred to God, to think that we love him; so that we cannot be induced to think that we love him not; for we know that the love to God is good, and we love ourselves so well, that we cannot endure to think that we want it. Hence it is said of some in the last times, 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3. *That they shall be covetous, proud, boasters, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers*, &c. *having a form of godliness, and denying the power of it;* and the fountain of all is *self-love; for*, saith he, *men shall be lovers of their ownselves:* And as self-love is the fountain of much evil, so it is the fountain of self-deceit, and keeps out any thing that may make men question their own condition; so that if a word come in and say, thou hast no ground for thy faith, the heart will be ready to answer and say, it cannot be that I am a self-deceiver; and self-love, as a partial judge, will offer to vindicate the man, and so makes him shift the challenge. Now when all these

these are put together, you may see how many grounds people have to go wrong upon; and men having hearts disposing and inclining them to go wrong, and little pains being taken to discover the deceit of them, is it any wonder that they think they believe, when indeed they believe not, and be empty-handed, having little or nothing to rest upon, while they think they are rich and want nothing? These are not fancied and far-fetched things, but obvious, and at hand, and may easily be gathered from your daily practice: In all which, it is our design and scope to bring you to try your long unquestioned peace; do not therefore think that it is impossible to be thus persuaded, as many of you are, and yet to be mistaken, which is another ground of mens deceit;) for Laodicea was very confident in *thinking herself to be rich and increased in goods, and to stand in need of nothing, when she was in the mean time poor, blind, miserable, wretched, and naked:* And the Galatians, as we may see, chap. v. 8. had *a persuasion which was not of God.* As there may be a persuasion of a point of doctrine, as being right, which yet is an error, so there may be a persuasion of a man's spiritual state as being right, and which he will stoutly maintain to be so, while in the mean time that persuasion is not of God that calleth him, but a strong delusion. If all that be faith that ye call faith, then certainly the way to heaven is much broader than the scripture hath chalked it out; and ministers needed not say, *Who believes our report?* for all should thus believe it. It will then, and must then turn to this, that your persuasion is not of him that calleth you; and if a deceit may lie and lurk under this persuasion of yours, ye have certainly so much the more need to put the business to trial.

And this is the last *use*, (which we cannot now insist on;) That seeing so many think they believe who believe not, and that there are but few that believe the report, and indeed rest on Christ for their salvation,

as he is offered to them in the gospel, it is your concernment to endeavour to put yourselves without the reach of this complaint, and to make it sure that ye have believed and received the report; is there any thing of concernment if this be not, even to make your calling and election sure? And that cannot be made sure as to you, till your faith be made sure. If we could prevail thus far with you, we would count it a blessed fruit of this and of many other sermons, even that some of you who have never questioned your faith, might be engaged first seriously to close with Christ, and then to put yourselves to the trial, that on distinct grounds ye might be able to say, *I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* There are many of you that talk of faith, and yet cannot only not assert your interest in Christ distinctly, nor cannot so much as give any solid grounds of your believing; and should not this, think ye, put you to try it; is there not a day coming wherein ye will all be tried whether your alledged faith was true faith, or but presumptuous? And wherein the conscience which is now quiet, and which it may be never keeped you from an hour's sleep, shall awake and put forth its sting, and shall bite and gnaw, and ye who shall continue under the power of this delusion, will be put to gnaw your tongues for pain and horror under the gnawings of your conscience. Ye that never knew in all your life what these things meant, had need to stand the more in awe, and to be afraid when ye come near death. Though it be a sad matter, that when we should be preaching, and would fain preach the doctrine of faith, it should, by reason of your delusion, be the great part of our work to be thus digging you out of your presumption, and overturning your carnal and ill-grounded hope; yet we have the greater confidence and the more to speak to, and insist on these truths, because they lie so near to the great

great design of the gospel, and to your immortal souls salvation; and though we are able to preach more plausible and sweet things to you, yet if these doctrines profit you not, these would not. Seeing therefore they are so profitable, we should not grow weary to speak, and ye should not be weary to hear them spoken of. Would to God ye were seriously and sincerely aiming to be clear in the matter of believing, and that ye stood in need, and were more capable of more pleasant truths; if so, we might have more comfortable, though we will not say more profitable doctrines to insist upon to you.

SERMON XII.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

WE have spoken at several occasions to this first part of the verse, and before we leave it, there is one *Use* several times hinted at already, to which there is good ground to speak, it being the design and purpose of these words to hold forth of what great concernment believing is, and of what great difficulty it is, and so many being to the ruin of their souls mistaken about it, there is ground to draw this *Use* of exhortation from it, to wit, That then all the hearers of this gospel would be exhorted to advert well to this, that they make faith sure in itself, and that they make it sure to themselves, seeing, as I said, so many are mistaken about it and beguile themselves. The more pressingly that the gospel calls for faith in

Chriſt, and the more weightily the Lord expoſtulates with the hearers of the goſpel, becauſe of their unbelief, they are doubtleſs ſo much the more concerned to receive it in its offer, and alſo to look well that they content not themſelves with gueſſing at faith, and that they never think that things are well with them, except they can give good proof and warrant that they are ſo, and that it is ſaving faith that they have, ſeeing there are ſo many that ſatisfy themſelves as being believers, when yet ſo few are believers indeed. The ſad miſtake and diſappointment of many, ſhould have ſo much influence upon us as to put us to more watchfulneſs, and to a more narrow trial of our own ſtate and condition, that we may know how it is with us. All that we have ſpoken to the doctrines of this firſt part of the verſe, may be as ſo many motives to ſtir you up to both theſe, and would to God we could be perſuaded to this as the *uſe* of ſo many ſermons, once to admit and take it for granted that it is the truth of God, that there is a neceſſity, an abſolute neceſſity for us to be really rolled and caſt on Jeſus Chriſt by faith, for obtaining of life through him? Though this be a very common *doctrine*, and ye would think a very common *uſe* of it; yet it is the great thing that God requires in the goſpel, and the neglect of it, or not receiving his Son, the very conteſt and quarrel that God hath with the hearers of it, and the cauſe of the ruin of ſo many ſouls that periſh under the goſpel. We ſhall therefore propoſe to you ſome conſiderations that may ſtir you up to this, and briefly anſwer a queſtion in each of theſe two branches of the *uſe*.

And *firſt*, For ſtirring you up to this receiving of Chriſt by faith. 1. Conſider if there be not a ſtanding quarrel and controverſy betwixt God and you for ſin; and if there be, as no doubt there is, conſider how that controverſy is to be removed; is there any other poſſible way but by faith in Chriſt? If we were preaching to ſuch as had never ſinned, and were never

ver under the hazard of the wrath of God, there might poſſibly be a difficulty to perſuade to a receiving of Chriſt; but when ye have all this in your conſcience, that there is ſin, and a curſe following ſin, and that there is no other way for removing that curſe but by Jeſus Chriſt, is there not reaſon to expect that ye ſhould receive this truth? Will any of you think to ſtand and hold it out againſt God? And if not, then ſure there is a neceſſity of believing in Jeſus Chriſt, or of lying under the wrath of God for ever.

2. Conſider that this goſpel and word of ſalvation is preached to you in particular: When we ſpeak of ſalvation, we do not ſay, that Chriſt was once preached to the Jews, or that in ſuch a diſtant nation there is a door opened for ſalvation in the goſpel: But we would turn over the words of the apoſtle (Acts xiii. 38.) to you, and ſay to you in his words, *Be it known to you therefore, Men and Brethren, that through this Man*, (to wit Jeſus Chriſt) *is preached to you remiſſion of ſins*, &c. and this brings the goſpel near you, even to your door; it lays before you the way of acceſs to God by Chriſt, and puts it ſo cloſe and home to you, that Chriſt muſt either have a refuſal, or a welcome from you. The firſt conſideration of your own ſinfulneſs and miſery might put you to ſeek after a Saviour, though he were at a great diſtance; but this other brings him to your heart and mouth; and is it fit (think ye) to neglect ſuch a fair occaſion? And will it be wiſdom, when ſalvation follows you, and cries after you, and wiſdom lifts up its voice in the ſtreets, ſaying, *O ye ſimple ones, how long will ye love fooliſhneſs?* &c. to ſtop your ear, or to run away from Chriſt, and to run upon your deſtruction? Do ye think that this goſpel will be ſilent always, or that your conſcience will be deaf and dumb always? There are many nations that have not the goſpel ſo near them; and it is hard to know, but the day may come when ye would be content to buy an offer of the goſpel

pel at a dear rate, and when there ſhall not be a Mediator, nor a days-man to be had between God and you; and theſe days will then be remembered with horror, which now ye ſecurely ſlip over.

3. Conſider what will come of this if ye do not believe the goſpel; know ye not that many periſh that hear the goſpel; and that upon this ſame very ground, that they did not receive Chriſt and ſalvation through him offered to them therein, and whereof they are now deprived? Are there not many this day curſing in hell, under the wrath of God, that they let ſlip and paſſed over ſo many golden opportunities of the goſpel without improvement? and know ye not that it will come to the ſame ſad paſs with you, if ye do not receive it? Do men live always? Is there not an appointed time for all men upon earth? If before we have ſavingly exerciſed faith on him for making peace with God, we be drawn to a reckoning before his tribunal, what will come of it? and are not our precious times going apace and always ſlipping by; and is not the work of faith by delays ſtill the more difficult? are not our bonds ſtill the more ſtrengthened? and doth not our indiſpoſition ſtill grow the greater? and is it not very ordinary to ſee theſe who have ſlighted the work of faith in their youth, to live ſtupid in their old age, and die ſenſeleſs?

4. Conſider what ſort of people they are, of whom the ſcripture ſpeaks as unbelievers, and whom the word of God holds forth to be eternally ſecluded from the preſence of God for the want of faith; many think that it is but the groſly profane, or ſuch as never had ſo much as the form of religion, and ſuch as others would ſcunner and loath to hear them but mentioned, that it is (I ſay) only ſuch that are accounted unbelievers; but the ſcripture ſpeaks of ſome *that ſeek to enter in and ſhall not be able;* that deſire to be in heaven, and take ſome pains to win in, and yet are never admitted to enter into it, and what is the reaſon,

ſon, becauſe they took not the way of believing for the obtaining of life and coming to heaven; they took the way of works, they took the way of prayer, of purpoſes, promiſes and reſolutions to amend and grow better, quite overlooking Chriſt and the way of believing in him, and ſo took the way of preſumption, and promiſed themſelves peace when there was no true peace, nor any ſolid ground for it.

5. Conſider (which is of affinity with the former conſideration) them that are ſecluded from the preſence of God for the want of faith, they are even men and women as we are, that lived in the ſame kingdom and city with us, that prayed in the ſame company with us, that thought themſelves as ſure of heaven as many of us do, that were guilty of the ſame or like ſins that we are guilty of, that have heard many of the ſame preachings that we have heard, and yet they periſh for want of faith, for not believing in the Son of God. Why then ſhould we think that impoſſible as to us, that is ſo common and frequent in others? Is not the ſame nature in us that is in others, and are not our hearts naturally as deceitful and corrupt as thoſe of others? and ſo may not we be beguiled as others? And is it not the ſame rule that he will walk by in judging of us, that he walked by in judging of others? What can be the reaſon that people will read and hear the word, and will promiſe to themſelves heaven, when the ſame word clears it plainly, that deſtruction is that which they have to look for from the Lord: it is nothing elſe but this confident and proud preſumption that many take for faith. Let not your precious opportunities ſlip away, and beguile not yourſelves in ſuch a concerning matter as faith is; ye will never get this loſs made up afterwards if ye miſs faith here.

Laſtly, Conſider the great neceſſity that the Lord hath laid upon all men and women, by a peremptory command and charge, to believe in the Son of God.

He

He hath not with greater peremptorineſs required prayer, nor dependance upon him, nor any other duty, than he hath required this, 1 John iii. 23. *And this is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt;* yea, its ſingled out as his main commandment: if that great inquiry be made, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* This is the anſwer, *Believe on Jeſus Chriſt.* Do you think that our Lord (who hath ſo marked and ſignalized this command in ſo ſpecial a manner) will never take an account for the ſlighting of it? Or do you think to ſatisfy him by your other duties without minding this? It cannot be. Suppoſe ye ſhould mourn all your life-time, and your life were a pattern to others, if ye want this one thing, faith in Chriſt, ye would be found tranſgreſſors, as having neglected the main work.

Now for the *Queſtion;* ye will ſay, What is this we are bidding you do, when we bid you believe? *Anſw.* When we call you to believe, we call you, 1. To be ſuitably affected with the ſenſe of your own naughtineſs, ſinfulneſs, and hazard; till there be ſomething of this, faith in our Lord Jeſus hath no acceſs, nor will ever get a welcome. Deep apprehenſions of the wrath that is coming, and a ſtanding in awe at the thoughts of our appearing before him, contribute much to it. I am not preaching deſperation to you, as ſome mutter, but we would preſs upon you the faith of the word of God, that tells you what we are, and livelineſs under that impreſſion, that ye may not be ſtopped or let, till ye come to a thorough cloſure with Chriſt: The moſt part of hearers never come this length; and this is the reaſon why many ſtumble in the very threſhold, and never make progreſs. 2. We call for and commend this to you, that ye would ſtudy to be throughly clear as to the uſefulneſs and excellency of Jeſus Chriſt, as to the efficacy of his death, as to the terms of the covenant of grace, whereby a ſinner comes to obtain right

to

to him. To be ſenſible of ſin and hazard without this, is the only way to make a man deſperate and mad; but when this is clear, it makes an open door to the ſinner, that he may ſee whether to run from the wrath to come. I do not only mean that ye would get the catechiſm, and be able to anſwer all the queſtions concerning the fundamentals of religion contained therein, but that ye would alſo and mainly ſeek to have the faith of theſe things in your hearts, and to have faith in God, that ye may be perſuaded, that he that was and is God, died for ſinners, and that by the application of his ſatisfaction, ſinners may obtain life, and that there is a ſufficient warrant given to a ſinner to hazard himſelf upon him. The firſt of theſe ſpeaks the neceſſity of ſome ſenſe; the ſecond holds out the neceſſity of a general faith, according to that word, Heb. xi. *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* We muſt know that there is a warrant to come, and ground to expect acceptance from God upon our coming, or elſe we will never come to, nor believe in Chriſt. The third thing that we call you to, when we call you to believe, is, That the ſinner would actually ſtretch out that faith, as the ſoul's hand for the receiving of Chriſt, and for the application of him to himſelf, and would actually caſt himſelf upon the ſatisfaction of Jeſus Chriſt for covering that ſinfulneſs that is in him, and would catch hold of, and cleave to him that is an able Saviour, for keeping the ſinner from ſinking under the weight of ſin that he lieth under: This is the exerciſe and practice of faith when it flows from the general doctrine of the neceſſity of believing ſuch things to be truths in themſelves, and then it is extended and put forth in practice, that we who are ſo certainly and ſenſibly loſt, muſt needs ſhare of that ſalvation which we believe to be in Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo for that, roll ourſelves on him. The firſt piece of ſenſe may be in a reprobate,

the second piece of faith, that there is a sufficient salvation in Christ to be gotten by them that believe in him, may be in a devil; but this third of actual making use of the satisfaction of Christ, for paying our debt, and rolling ourselves upon him, that is the faith and exercise of it that is particular to a sound believer, and the very thing that constitutes a believer, and it is that which we commend to you, that ye may not stand and please yourselves with looking only upon Christ, but that ye may cast and roll yourselves over upon him, that Christ may get your weight, and that all your burdens and wants may be upon him, which to do ye must be enabled by the mighty power of grace, whereof the next part of the verse.

The second branch of the *Use* which follows upon this, is, That we would desire you not only to follow this way of making your peace with God, but to follow the trying and proving of it to your own satisfaction, that ye may be warrantably confident that it is so. There is a great difference betwixt these, to believe in Christ, and to be clear and certain that we do believe in him; as there is a necessity of the first, without which there cannot be peace with God, so there is a necessity of the second, though not simply, as without which there can be no peace with God, yet upon this account, as without which we cannot be so comforted in God. And seeing there are so many who do not believe, who yet think themselves to be believers, and seeing there is nothing more common among the hearers of the gospel, than to reject Christ offered in it; and to misbelieve, and yet nothing more common than to be confident that they do believe; there is good ground here to exhort you to put your faith to the touch-stone, that ye may know whether ye may confidently assert your own faith upon good ground, and abide by it. We would think if it were remembered, and seriously considered, how great a scarcity there is of believers, and how rare a thing

thing it is to get any to receive Chriſt, that people needed not be much preſſed to put their faith to the trial; and when there will not be one among many found who will paſs under the account of a real believer with Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould not the moſt part ſuſpect themſelves, ſeeing the moſt part that hear the goſpel are the object of this complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* or very few have believed it; ye would ſtudy to have ſome well grounded confidence in this, that ye are not preſuming and going upon grounds that will fail you at laſt, but that ye be in caſe to ſay on ſolid grounds with the apoſtle, *I know whom I have believed*, &c. There is a faith and hope that will make many aſhamed; and certainly, in the day of judgment, when Chriſt ſhall have to do with theſe perſons, that never once thought to be thruſt away from him, they of all men ſhall be thruſt away from him with greateſt ſhame. O! the confuſion that will fill and overwhelm them who had a profeſſion of Chriſt, and yet had never the root of the matter in them, above and beyond many others: Dare many of you upon the confidence ye have, look death in the face, it is no great matter to be confident in the time of health; but will ye then be able to comfort yourſelves in the promiſes of God? do not promiſe to yourſelves the things in the covenant, except ye be endeavouring in God's way to be ſure ye are believers indeed. Our life depends upon our faith, but our conſolation depends much upon our clearneſs that we have faith, and that we are in Chriſt, and therefore there is much need to preſs this upon you: There is no way to rid you of the terrors of God, and to make you comfortably ſure of your particular intereſt in the promiſes of God, but by making it ſure and clear that ye are believers in Chriſt indeed.

There are three or four ſorts of people to whom we would ſpeak a little here. 1. There are ſome who think that if they could do other duties, though they ſhould never do this, to wit, to make their calling

and election ſure, they would be and do well enough: Are there not many of you that never ſo much as ſet yourſelves to try whether your faith would abide God's trial or not? Ah! Ah! An atheiſtical indifferency, a ſlighting of the conſolations of God, aboundeth amongſt many; ſo that they think the promiſes and the conſolations that are to be gotten in the promiſes, are not ſo much worth, as to be thereby put to take pains to try and ſee, whether they belong to them or not; but the day will come that many of you will curſe yourſelves for your neglecting and ſlighting of this. A ſecond ſort are thoſe, who, becauſe they were never ſure of peace with God themſelves; and becauſe they were never ſure of their own faith, neither ever concernedly endeavoured to be ſo, they think its all but fancy that's ſpoken of aſſurance of faith, and of peace with God; they think its but gueſſing at the beſt. There is ſuch a ſort of perſons, who think they may be doing as they can, and not trouble themſelves with ſuch fancies, or nice things; but if ye aſk them what will come of them at laſt? They will tell you, they will truſt that to God. Think ye it nothing, that God hath laid ſo many commands on you to make your calling and election ſure? And think ye it nothing that he hath given ſo many marks to try it by? And that ſome of the people of God do holily and humbly glory and boaſt ſo much of their communion with God, of their aſſurance of his love to them, and of their ſpecial intereſt in him? Do not all theſe ſay, that there is ſuch a thing as this to be had? There is a third ſort that pleaſe themſelves with mere conjectures about this matter; and the greater their ſecurity is, they perſuade themſelves the more that they have faith: this is as ſad as any of the former, when they grant all, that men ſhould make their calling and election ſure, and ſhould endeavour to be ſure of their faith; but in the mean time take peace with the devil, and peace with their luſts, for

peace

peace with God, and a covenant with hell and death, for a real bargain with God. This is as true as this word of God is, that there are many that put by all challenges by this, and never ſuſpect their faith; they hope that all ſhall be well, and they muſt always believe; as if that were the whole duty of faith to keep down all challenges. A fourth ſort is, even of the generation of them that have ſomething of God in them, who fear in a manner to make all ſure, and think it a piece of humility, and of holy and tender walking to maintain doubting, even as others think it faith to maintain preſumption: They are always complaining, as if all things were wrong, and nothing right in their caſe, and ſo nouriſh and cheriſh miſbelief: There is ſuch a thing as this, that marreth even ſerious ſouls in their endeavours to make their calling and election ſure; and as long as this is, they cannot win to the ſuitable diſcovery of this excellent grace that God calls them to exerciſe, even *faith* in the Lord Jeſus: need we make uſe of motives to preſs you to this trial of your faith, and to this giving of all diligence to make it ſure, who have ſpecially hitherto neglected it? If ye knew any thing of the vexation that unbelief hath with it, and what horror in conſcience from the ſenſe of diſtance from God were, ye would think it a great matter to be clear in this thing; and if it were known and believed how this deluſion and uncertainty of faith deſtroys the moſt part of men in the world, even of the viſible church; durſt men lie in their ſecurity as moſt do, without all endeavours to make it ſure on good ground, that they do indeed believe? Durſt they lie ſtill under God's curſe, if they thought themſelves to be really under it, and did not fooliſhly fancy that it is otherwiſe with them? Durſt men treaſure up wrath to themſelves, if they thought not that the hope they had were good enough? O! but preſumption beguiles and deſtroys many ſouls; and particularly this ſame preſumption

of

of peoples thinking themſelves right when they are wrong, hath deſtroyed, and doth deſtroy, and will deſtroy more members of the viſible church, than prophanity, drunkenneſs, whoredom, theft, deſperation, or any other of theſe groſs, and much abhorred evils do. This is the thing that locks men up in their ſin, even their preſumption, when they ſay on the matter, *We ſhall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our own heart?* It is this that makes men without fear, ſteal, and lie, and commit adultery, &c. that they ſay, *Is not the Lord among us?* Is not this the thing that keeps many of you that ye never tremble at the word of God? We have faith in God (ſay ye) and we will truſt in him; therefore ſeeing preſumption is ſo common, have ye not need to try your faith? If there were ſo much counterfeit money in the country, that it were a rare thing to get one good piece of money, ye would think yourſelves greatly concerned and obliged to try it well, leſt ye were cheated with baſe and counterfeit coin; is there not need then, yea, infinitely much more need for them that would be ſo wiſe as not to be beguiled about the ſalvation of their ſouls, to ſearch and try whether their faith will abide God's trial or not?

Ye will readily move this Queſtion. What then are the characters or evidences of a ſolid and real faith that will abide the trial, by which the pretended faith that is among the men of this generation, may be examined and put to juſt trial?

I ſhall firſt name ſome direct ſcriptures, holding out ſome things eſſentially accompanying faith; and then ſhall add others, having more condeſcending characters for the more particular differencing of this, and helping to the deciſion of this great queſtion.

The firſt mark whereby ye may try your faith is, the ground and riſe of it; or that whereby it is begotten and cheriſhed; *Faith comes* (ſaith the apoſtle, Rom.

Rom. x. 10.) *by hearing?* Doctrinal faith comes by the preaching of the gospel, and saving faith is wrought instrumentally by the same word of God it being the power of God to salvation; it being the word that is the very ground of our faith: I would ask you from whence comes your faith, and what hand the word of God hath in it? there are many that have a sort of faith not only without, but contrary to the word of God, whereby they believe that they will get heaven, while in the mean time this word of God does directly exclude them: got ye your faith maintained without ever knowing the necessity of a promise for that effect? Can ye maintain your peace, and not have so much as any foundation in the truth and faithfulness of God to build it upon? Never love that faith that hungers not after the word, that is supposed to be lively without being ever fed by the word, that cannot claim either its rise and original, or its growth from the word: I will not say from this or that word in particular, or at this or that time read or heard, but from the word of God; the word is the very foundation that faith builds upon: if we look to what either accompanieth or followeth faith, there are some plain scriptures that will make that clear, as Acts xv. 9. *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.* (There was indeed once a great difference between Jews and Gentiles; but now when he hath brought both to believe in Christ, the difference is removed) There is an efficacy in it to circumcise the heart, to purify it, and to banish lusts out of it; for it closes and unites with Christ, and so brings him home to dwell in the heart; and where Christ dwells he commands, and so whatever opposes him is banished: faith gives Christ welcome, and will give nothing welcome to dwell with him that is opposite and displeasing to him. Faith improves Christ for the subduing of its lusts, and mortifying its corruptions; whereas before

fore there might be a fair outside of a profession, and something clean outwardly, and much filthiness and rottenness within; but when faith is exercised on Christ, it purifies from all filthiness of the spirit, as well as of the flesh, it applies the promises for that end, even to get the inside made clean as well as the outside: Yea, its main work is, to have the inside, the heart purified; that being the fountain of all the pollution that defiles the man, and brings the other necessarily along with it. Never love that faith that leaves the heart as a swines-sty to lusts, that leaves it swarming with unclean and vain thoughts, or that leaves the heart just as it was before; or that faith that only cleanseth the outside, and does no more: such a faith, however esteemed by the man, will never be accounted for true saving faith before God. I do not, I dare not say that believers will always discern this heart-purity or cleanness: But this I say, that true faith will set the man a work to purify the heart, and will be making use of Christ for that end; not only to have the arm of the dominion of sin broken, but to have the soul more and more delivered from the indwelling power of it: and this will be the design that he will sincerely drive, to get the heart purified within, as well as the outward man; inward heart-abominations will be grievous and burdensome to him as well as scandalous out-breakings.

A second place is, Gal. ii. 20, 21. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life*, &c. If ye would know a companion of true faith, here is one, it hath a life of faith with it: There is one life killed, and another life is quickened; the life that is killed is that whereby the man sometime lived to the law; *I am dead to the law*, says the apostle, a man's good conceit of himself that once he had, is killed and taken away; he wonders how it came that he thought himself holy, or a believer, or how he could promise to himself heaven in

in the condition he was in: there is another life comes in the place of that, and it is a life that is quickened and maintained by; and from nothing in the man himself, but it is wholly from and by Christ: The believer hath his holiness and strength for doing all duties called for, and his comfort also from Christ; and he holds withal his very natural life, his present being in the world from Christ, his all is in Christ; his stock of life, strength and furniture is not in himself, but he lives by a continual traffic, as it were on bills of exchange betwixt Christ and him; when he wants, he sends a bill to Christ, and it is answered in every thing that he stands in need of, and that is good for him. He is a dead man, and he is a living man; and wherever true faith is, there the man is dead, and there the man is living: Do not I pray mistake it, by thinking that true faith is but vented, puts forth itself only in reference to this or that particular, or at this or that particular time only; for faith must be exercised not only by starts, as when we are under challenges for sin, or at prayer; but we must design and endeavour to exercise faith through all our life; that is, we must by faith look for every thing that is useful and needful for us from Christ; and be always endeavouring to drive on a common trade of living this way: we must be habituating ourselves to seek after peace, strength, and consolation, and what else we need, out of the fulness that is in him. This life of faith is to see the want of all things in ourselves, and yet to have all things in ourselves; contenting and comforting ourselves that there is strength in him, though we be weak in ourselves; and that he hath gotten the victory over all his and our enemies; and that we shall at last through him, be victorious in our own persons, contenting and satisfying ourselves that he hath complete righteousness, though we be bankrupt, and have none of our own; and betaking ourselves only to that righteousness for our justifica-

tion before God: thus making a life to ourſelves in him, he living in us by his Spirit, and we living in him by faith? O ſweet and deſirable but myſterious life!

The third place is, Gal. v. 6. *In Chriſt Jeſus, neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but faith that worketh by love:* He doth not ſimply ſay faith, *but faith that works by love:* For faith is an operative grace: and this is the main vent of it, the thing by which it works, it works by love: faith is the hand of the new creature, whereby every thing is wrought, it having life from Chriſt; and we may ſay that love is in a manner the hand of faith, or rather like the fingers upon the hand of faith, whereby it handleth every thing tenderly, even out of love to God in Chriſt, and to others for his ſake: faith works, and it works by love: That is a ſound and good faith that warms the heart with love to Chriſt; and the nearer that faith brings the believer to him, it warms the heart with more love to others. And therefore love to the people of God is given as an evidence of one that is born of God; 1 John v. 1. becauſe, wherever true faith is, there cannot but be love to the children of God flowing from love to him that begets them: that faith that is not affected with God's diſhonour out of love to him, and that can endure to look upon the difficulties, ſufferings and afflictions of the children of God, without ſympathizing and being kindly affected therewith, is not to be taken for a ſound faith, but to be ſuſpected for a counterfeit.

The fourth place is, James ii. 14. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, &c. True faith hath always ſound holineſs with it, in all manner of converſation in the deſign and endeavour of the believer, which is withal through grace in ſome meaſure attained: What avails it for a man to ſay that he loves another, when being naked or deſtitute, he bids him depart in peace, be warmed, be filled; and yet in the mean time gives him

him nothing that he ſtands in need of; would not ſuch a poor man think himſelf but mocked? even ſo, will not God reckon you to be but mock believers, or mockers of faith, when ye profeſs yourſelves to be believers in Chriſt, while in the mean time ye have neither indeed heart-purity, nor holineſs in your outſide converſation? that is but ſuch a faith as devils may have that will never do you good: Ye would believe this for a truth, that there will never a faith paſs for faith in God's account; and ſo there ſhould never a faith paſs for faith in your account; but that faith that ſets a man at work to the ſtudy of holineſs; that faith that works by love, that faith that purifies the heart, and that faith that puts the perſon in whom it is, to ſtudy to have Chriſt living in him, and himſelf living in Chriſt.

I promiſed to name a few ſcriptures that ſpeak forth ſome more condeſcending characters of faith. And 1. I would think it a good token of faith, to have men afraid of miſſing and falling ſhort of the promiſes, which may be gathered from Heb. iv. 1. That ſtout confidence that thinks it is impoſſible to miſs the promiſes, is a ſuſpected and dangerous faith, not to be loved; it is a much better faith that fears, than that faith that is more ſtout, except there be a ſweet mixture of holy ſtoutneſs and fear together. It is ſaid, Heb. 11. 7. that *by faith* Noah *being moved by fear, prepared an Ark*, &c. Noah had the faith of God's promiſe, that he ſhould be kept from being drowned in the deluge with the reſt of the world, and yet he was mourning and trembling in preparing the Ark. If there were much faith among you, it would make many of you more holily afraid than ye are. Love not that faith the worſe that ye never hear a threatning but ye tremble at it, and are touched by it to the quick. 2. It is a good token of ſaving faith, when it hath a diſcovery and holy ſuſpicion of unbelief waiting on it, ſo that the perſon dare not ſo confide in and truſt his

own faith, as not to dread unbelief, and to tell Chriſt of it. There is a poor man that comes to Chriſt, Mark ix. 23, 24. to whom the Lord ſaith, *If thou canſt believe*, or canſt thou believe? Yes, Lord, (ſays he) *I believe, help thou mine unbelief;* there was ſome faith in him, but there was alſo unbelief mixed with it; his unbelief was ſo great that it was almoſt like to drown his faith; but he puts it in Chriſt's hand, and will neither deny his faith nor his unbelief, but puts the matter ſincerely upon Chriſt, to ſtrengthen his faith, and to amend and help his unbelief. It is a ſuſpected faith that's at the top of perfection at the very firſt, and ere ever ye wot. There are ſome ſerious ſouls, that think becauſe they have ſome unbelief, that therefore they have no faith at all; but true faith is ſuch a faith that is joined with ſuſpected, and feared, or ſeen unbelief. That faith is ſureſt where people fear and ſuſpect unbelief, and ſee it, and when they are frighted with their unbelief, and cry out under it, and make their unbelief an errand to Chriſt, it is a token that faith is there. 3. The third character is, That it will have with it a cleaving to Chriſt, and a fear to preſume in cleaving to him. There will be two things ſtriving together, an eagerneſs to be at him, and a fear they be found preſumptuous in medling with him, and an holy trembling to think on it; yet notwithſtanding it muſt and will be ventured upon. The woman ſpoken of Mark v. 28. reckoning thus with herſelf, *If I can but touch his cloaths I ſhall be whole;* and ſhe not only believes this to be truth, but cut crouds and thruſts in to be at him; yet *v.* 33. when ſhe comes before Chriſt, ſhe trembles as if ſhe had been taken in a fault, not having dared to come openly to him, *but behind him;* ſhe behoved to have a touch of him, but ſhe durſt not in a manner own and avouch her doing of it, till ſhe be unavoidably put to it. It is a ſuſpected and unſound faith that never trembled at offering to believe; there is reaſon to be

be jealous that faith not to be of the right ſtamp, that never walked under the impreſſion of the great diſtance between Chriſt and the perſon, the ſenſe whereof is the thing that makes the trembling, I ſay not deſperation, nor any utter diſtruſt of Chriſt's kindneſs, but trembling ariſing from the conſideration of the great diſtance and diſproportion that's between him and the perſon. Faith holds the ſinner a going to Chriſt, and the ſenſe of its own ſinfulneſs and worthleſſneſs keeps him under holy fear, and in the exerciſe of humility. Paul once thought himſelf a brave man (as we may ſee Rom. vii. 9.) but when he was brought to believe in Chriſt, he ſees he was a dead and undone man before. I give you theſe three marks of a true faith from that chapter. 1. It diſcovers a man his former ſinfulneſs, and particularly his former ſelf-conceit, pride, and preſumption. *I was*, ſaith Paul, *alive without the law once*, &c. a man living upon the thoughts of his own holineſs; *but when the law came, I died;* he fell quite from theſe high thoughts. A ſecond mark is, a greater reſtleſſneſs of the body of death, it becoming in ſome reſpect worſe company, more fretful and ſtruggling than ever it did before; *ſin revived*, ſaith Paul, though he had no more corruption in him than he had before, but it awaked and beſtirred itſelf more. I dare ſay, that though there be not ſo much corruption in a believer as there is in a natural man, yet it ſtruggleth much more, and is more painful and diſquieting to the believer, and breeds him a great deal more trouble; for, ſays the apoſtle, on the matter when God graciouſly poured light and life in me, ſin took that occaſion to grow angry, and to be enraged that ſuch a neighbour was brought in beſide it, it could not endure that; as an unruly and curriſh dog barks moſt bitterly when an honeſt gueſt comes to the houſe; ſo doth corruption bark and make more noiſe than it did before when grace takes place in the ſoul. There are ſome that think they have

have the more faith, becauſe they feel no corruption ſtir in them; and there are others that think they have no faith at all; becauſe they feel corruption ſtruggling more, and growing more troubleſome to them; but the ſtirring and ſtruggling of corruption, if men be indeed burdened, and affected, and afflicted with it, will rather prove their having of faith than their wanting of it. Love that faith well that puts and keeps men contending in the fight with the body of death; for tho' this be not good in itſelf that corruption ſtirreth, yet ſin is of that ſinful nature, that it flees always more in their face that look God and heavenwards, than of others that are ſleeping ſecurely under its dominion. A third mark is, when the ſoul hath never peace in any of its conflicts or combats with corruption, but when it reſolves in faith exerciſed on Jeſus Chriſt, as it was with Paul, in that chapter after his converſion. That is a ſound faith that not only makes peace at firſt by Chriſt, but that cannot (to ſay ſo) fight one fair ſtroke in the ſpiritual warfare, nor look corruption in the face, nor promiſe to itſelf an iſſue from any aſſault of the enemy, but by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, as it was with the apoſtle, who toward the end of that chapter, lamentably cries, *O! wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Yet immediately ſubjoins faith's triumphing in Chriſt, *I thank God thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord;* he, perhaps, before his converſion, thought he could do well enough all alone; but it is not ſo now, when he can do nothing without Chriſt, eſpecially in this ſore war with his corruption. That is a ſound faith that makes uſe of Chriſt in every thing it is called to, that joins him, I mean Chriſt, in the work on every occaſion, and particularly when it comes as it were to grapling and hand-blows with this formidable enemy the body of death, this monſter, whereof when one head is cut off, another as it were ſtarts up in its place.

For a cloſe of this purpoſe, I beſeech and intreat ſuch

ſuch of you as are ſtrangers to ſaving faith (who are I fear the greateſt part) to conſider ſeriouſly all I have ſpoken of the nature and native evidences of it, that you may be undeceived of your ſoul-ruining miſtakes about it, and let ſincere and ſound believers, from all, be more cleared, confirmed, and comforted in their faith.

SERMON XIII.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

——*And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

THERE are many miſtakes in the way of religion, wherewith the moſt part are poſſeſſed, and amongſt the reſt there is one, that generally the hearers of the goſpel think it ſo eaſy to believe, that there is no difficulty in that by any thing; they think it hard to pray, to keep the ſabbath, to be holy, but the moſt part think there is no difficulty in believing; and yet unbelief is ſo rife, and faith ſo rare and difficult, that the prophet Iſaiah here in his own name, and in name of all the miniſters of the goſpel cries out, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* he complains that he could get but very few to take the word off his hand; and becauſe it weighted him to find it ſo, and becauſe he would fain have it to take impreſſion on his hearers, he doubles expreſſions to the ſame purpoſe. *And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* which in ſum is, there is much preaching and many hearers of the goſpel, but little believing of it, few in whoſe heart the work of faith is wrought; it is but here

here one and there one that this gospel hath efficacy upon, for uniting of them to Jesus Christ, and for working a work of saving grace in them; the effectual working of God's grace reaches the hearts but of a few.

For opening the words, we shall speak a little to these three. 1. To what is meant by the *arm of the Lord*. 2. To what is meant by the *revealing* of the arm of the Lord. 3. To the scope and dependance of these words on the former.

For the *first*, In general know, the *arm* of the Lord is not to be understood *properly;* the Lord being a Spirit, hath no arms, hands, nor feet, as men have; but it is to be understood *figuratively*, as holding out some property or attribute of God. By the *arm* of the Lord then we understand in general the power of God, the arm of man being that whereby he exerteth his power, performeth exploits, or doth any work: So the *arm* of the Lord is his power whereby he produceth his mighty acts; as it is said, Psalm cxviii. 15. *The right hand of the Lord hath done valiantly:* xcviii. 1. *His hand and his arm hath gotten him the victory;* and because the power of God is taken either more generally for that which is exerted in the works of common providence, or more particularly for that which is put forth in the work of saving grace: We take it here in short to be the grace of God exerting its power, in and by the gospel, for the converting of souls, and causing them savingly to believe; so Rom. i. 16. *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes;* not simply as it consists in speaking of good, sweet, and seasonable words, but as it cometh backed by the irresistible power of the grace of God, as the word is, 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. *We preach Christ, to the Jews a stumbling-block; and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God and the wisdom of God;* and that it is so to be taken

taken here, the connexion of these words with the former will make it clear; for sure he is not speaking of the power of God in the works of common providence, but of his power in the conversion of souls to Christ; even of that power which works saving faith in the elect.

For the *second*, the *revealing* of the arm of the Lord: By this we do not understand the revealing of it *objectively* as its brought to light by preaching of the gospel; for thus it is revealed to all the hearers of the gospel; its in this respect not kept hid, but brought forth clearly to them in the word. And therefore *secondly*, The revealing of this arm or power of the Lord, is to be understood of the *subjective* inward manifesting of it, with efficacy and life to the heart, by the effectual operation of the Spirit of the Lord; as its said of the great things prepared for them that love God, 1 Cor. ii. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit:* It is that which is called, 1 Cor. ii. *The demonstration of the spirit and of power*, which make plain and powerful to the spirit of the hearer inwardly that which the word preacheth outwardly to the ear, which without this would strike only on the ear, and yet remain still an hidden mystery: This is the *revealing* of the Lord's arm that is here spoken of; because it is that on which believing dependeth, and of the want whereof the prophet sadly complaineth, even where there was much preaching.

For the *third*, to wit, the scope, dependance, and connexion of these words with the former, we conceive they come in, both for confirmation and for explication of the former words. 1. For confirmation, there are, as hath been said, but few that believe; for there are but few that have this saving and effectual work of God's grace reaching their heart; tho' they have the word preached to them, yet they have not the arm of the power of God's grace manifested to them; and so he confirms his former doctrine con-

cerning the paucity of believers under the preaching of the gospel. *First*, By asserting the fewness of them that are brought to believe, to be converted, and effectually called by the gospel; which comes to pass through their unbelief. And, *secondly*, By asserting their fewness in respect of God's sovereign applying of his grace in the gospel, which is but to few; its but few that believe, for its but few that he makes effectual application of his grace to. 2. We say it comes in to clear and explicate the former words, whether we take it by way of a reason, or of answer to an objection; for if it be said, how can it be that Isaiah, Paul, yea, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself, should preach so powerfully, and yet that so few should believe? He answers, Its not to be marvelled at, in respect of God, as if he were frustrated of his design; no such matter: Its because the power of Jesus Christ is revealed but to few; and we take this the rather to be the meaning of these words; because when Christ is preaching, and many take offence and stumble, John vi. 43, 44. he says, *Murmur not among yourselves, no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him;* there must be an effectual work of the grace of God put forth on the heart, else none will believe on me: so its said, John xii. 37, 38. that *they believed not on him, that the saying of Isaiahs might be fulfilled which he spoke, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? therefore they could not believe; because that Isaiahs said again, He hath blinded their eyes*, &c. he speaketh not so to apologize for, or to excuse their unbelief, but to shew the connexion that is betwixt the efficacy of the work of grace, and believing or turning to God, that where the powerful and effectual work of grace goeth not forth with the preached gospel, there will be then no believing nor conversion, no saving change of the person from nature to grace.

That which we would say from these words, may be

be drawn to three doctrines, which I shall first propose, and then clear and apply them for use. The first is, That in the work of conversion and begetting of saving faith, there is requisite and necessary, besides the preaching of the word, a distinct, inward, peculiar, real, immediate, efficacious, and powerful work of the Spirit of the Lord on the hearts of as many hearers as are converted by this gospel. 2. That it is but few of many hearers in whom the Lord thus efficaciously and effectually works by his Spirit and power of his grace; its but here one and there one, a very few who are thus wrought upon and converted. 3. That there is a necessary and inseparable connexion betwixt this inward and efficacious work of the Spirit, and faith or conversion. Where this work of grace is not, there cannot be faith; and where it is, faith necessarily must be, otherwise these two could not be commensurable, of equal extent, and reciprocal; *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* He is not, neither can be a believer to whom it is not revealed; and he is, and cannot but be a believer to whom he is revealed.

For the *first*, We say there is in the work of conversion, and begetting of faith, beside the preaching of the gospel, a distinct, inward, peculiar, real, immediate, efficacious, and powerful work of the Spirit of the Lord requisite and necessary for conversion and begetting of faith, to convince of sin, and to humble for it, to enlighten the mind in the knowledge of Christ, to renew the will and affections, and to persuade and enable the soul of the sinner to embrace and receive Jesus Christ, as he is offered in the gospel. We shall *first* take notice of, and clear some words in the doctrine, and then confirm it.

First, For clearing of some words in the doctrine, we say, 1. It is a *distinct* work of the Spirit, distinguished and separable from the word; though it goes along as he pleaseth with the word, yet it is not as if

there were ſome power infuſed into the word, and went always and neceſſarily along with the word, which is the fooliſh and groundleſs conceit of ſome; for altho' it accompany the word, yet its from a diſtinct agent, working, and a diſtinct work, and is inſeparable (as I ſaid) from the word, tho' it be wrought on the heart of the ſame ſinner to whoſe ear the word is preached. 2. It is an *inward* work of the Spirit; for beſides the outward and external preaching and calling by the word, there is an inward, powerful, effectual work and calling of the Spirit in the converſion of a ſinner, which ſpeaks to the heart, as well as the word ſpeaks to the ear; ſo that this work of the Spirit that goes along in converſion, is much more than any external perſuaſion of the preached word can produce. 3. We ſay its a peculiar work, to difference it from what is common to the hearers of the goſpel; for it is a work that is peculiar to them whom the Lord converts, and is applied to none other, but to thoſe in whom he works faith, and whom he effectually calleth by his grace. It is a peculiar work then and not common; for if it were common to all the hearers of the goſpel, and not peculiar to ſome; theſe two could not go together and be commenſurable; *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* 4. We ſay its a *real* work as well as a powerful: a real work of the Spirit, that is not only able and powerful to produce the effect, and to convert the ſinner, but real and powerful in producing and bringing of it about, and to paſs by a real influence of the Spirit actually renewing the will, infuſing and creating the habits of grace, and particularly the very habit of faith amongſt others in the ſoul; which is quite another thing than the ſuppoſing and ſaying that a man hath power to believe and be converted; that there is no more requiſite to his converſion, but to perſuade him to put forth that power and ſtrength which he hath into exerciſe or practice.

Its

Its a real work of the Spirit, and a powerful bringing about of the converſion of the ſinner in a phyſical way, as they ſay in the ſchool. 5. We ſay it is an *immediate* work of the Spirit on the heart, to difference it from a mediate perſuaſion, or moral ſwaſion (as it is called) as if there were no more requiſite in converſion but God's enlightening of the mind, and by that perſuading the will to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt, without any immediate work of the Spirit on the will itſelf. In this doctrine, we take in all theſe according to the ſcripture; in oppoſition to the ſeveral errors invented by men of corrupt minds, about the work of converſion and of ſaving faith; God's arm and hand muſt be revealed, the work and power of his efficacious grace muſt be put forth, for moving and inclining the heart and affections, and for determining the will itſelf.

We might further clear and confirm all theſe from that famous inſtance of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14. Where Paul preaching to ſome women, its ſaid of her, *Whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended to the things which were ſpoken of Paul;* where we find theſe things differenced. 1. The Lord's powerful work on her heart from Paul's preaching to her ear, the Lord *opened* her heart. 2. Its an inward work, for its on the *heart*. 3. Its a peculiar work, its not all who hear Paul preach whoſe hearts are opened, but its the heart of one Lydia. 4. Its in the nature of it a real work, that makes a real inward change on her. 5. Its an immediate work; for the Lord not only enlightens her judgment, but goes down to the heart and opens it, and works a change in it immediately. Paul indeed by his preaching opens the way of ſalvation to all that heard him, from which, tho' many go away with their hearts unopened; yet the Lord hath a ſecret, myſterious, real, inward work on her heart, which is evidenced by the effect; for he not only enlightens her mind, but makes her willingly yield to the call of the goſpel, by opening of her heart.

In the *second* place, To speak a little for confirmation of the doctrine, we would consider these four or five grounds or reasons, to shew that there is such a work of the Spirit wherever faith is begotten, and that most intelligibly in them that are of age. 1. It's clear from these places of scripture, where there is an express distinction and difference put betwixt the outward ministry of the word, and this inward, powerful, efficacious work of grace on the heart, and wherein the great weight of conversion is laid on this inward work, and not on the outward ministry of the word; as Deut. xxix. 4. where the Lord by Moses tells the people, how many things they had seen and heard; and yet says he, *The Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.* They had the outward means in plenty, when they wanted in the mean time the inward power; the gift of a spiritual life, and the making them spiritually active to exert it, was with-holden, and therefore they did not savingly perceive, see, or hear; John vi. 44. *Murmur not among yourselves, no man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him; its written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God, every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me;* where there is very clearly a distinction put betwixt the outward teaching and the Father's drawing, betwixt the minister's teaching and God's teaching. It was one thing to be taught outwardly by Christ as the prophet of his church, and another thing to be drawn and taught inwardly of the Father: this inward teaching is called *drawing*, to shew that it is not external oratory or eloquence consisting in words, to persuade, that can effect the business, but a powerful draught of the arm of the Lord reaching the heart. There are several other scriptures full and clear to this purpose; as Psal. ciii. 3. and Acts xi. 21. A *second* ground, of kin to the former, is from the many and various expressions that

that are used in the scriptures for holding forth this work of the Spirit of God in conversion, that point out, not only on hand working, and a work wrought; but an inward powerful way of working and bringing about the work, as Jer. xxxi. 34. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts:* Ezek. xi. 19. *I will give them one heart, I will put a new spirit within them, and will take away the stony heart of their flesh.* Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. *A new heart will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you,* &c. Jer. xxxii. 40. *I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me;* it is called the Father's *drawing*, John vi. 44. In the saints prayers (as Psal. li.) it is called even as to further degrees of this work, or restoring of lost degrees, *creating of a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within:* And many more like expressions there are, which shew not only man's impotency and inability to convert or savingly to change himself; but also that to his conversion there is necessary, an inward, real, peculiar, efficacious, powerful work of the Spirit of grace. 3. It is clear, and may be confirmed from the power of God, which he puts forth and applies in the begetting of faith, and in working conversion: It is not a mediate work whereby he only persuades congruously, as some love to speak; but an immediate and efficacious work, whereby with mighty power he works conversion. *It is God*, saith the apostle, Phil. ii. 13. *that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure:* And as he not only persuadeth, but effectually worketh; so he not only works on the judgment to the enlightening of it, but on the will, to incline and determine it, by curing it of its crookedness and perverseness, backwardness, obstinacy, and rebellion; and the power whereby he worketh his great work is said, Eph. i. 19. *To be that same mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the the dead, that ye may know*, saith the apostle, *what is the*

the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Chriſt, when he raiſed him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand, &c. It is ſuch a power that works faith, and ſo exerciſed in the working of faith, as it was in the raiſing of Chriſt from the dead. Now, could there be uſe for ſuch a power, if there were no more requiſite to converſion, but an objective ſwaſion, or a bare propoſal of the object with external perſuaſion to embrace it, wherein the ſoul is left to itſelf to chuſe or refuſe as it pleaſeth? Certainly if there were no more, conſidering our natural enmity to God and his grace, the devil and corruption would have much more influence, and a far greater ſtroke upon the heart to cloſing up of the ſame in unbelief, than any outward perſuaſion would have as to the opening of the heart, and the begetting of faith; therefore his power is neceſſarily called for, and the Lord addeth it in converting ſinners, elſe the work would for ever lie behind: and if men be ſpiritually dead in treſpaſſes, (as all men by nature are) as real a power muſt be exerted in raiſing and quickening them, as there is exerted in raiſing and quickening the dead. 4. It may alſo be cleared from ſome in whom this power is exerted, as ſome children, ſome deaf perſons, and others, whom we cannot deny to be reached by the grace of God; and yet there can be no other way how they are reached, but by this effectual, efficacious, and immediate powerful work of the Spirit, they not being capable of reaſoning or perſuaſion by force of argument.

We ſhall only add two reaſons further, to confirm, and ſome way to clear, why it is that the Lord works, and muſt work diſtinctly, inwardly, really, powerfully, and immediately in working faith, and converting of ſinners. The firſt is drawn from the exceeding great deadneſs, indiſpoſition, averſeneſs, perverſeneſs, impotency, inability, and impoſſibility that is in us naturally

naturally for exercising faith in Christ. If men naturally be dead in sins and trespasses; if the mind be blind, if the affections be quite disordered, and if the will be utterly corrupted and perverted; then that which converts, and changes and renews them, must be a real, inward peculiar, immediate, powerful work of the Spirit of God, there being no inward seed of the grace of God in them to be quickened: that seed must be communicated to them, and sown in them e'er they can believe, which can be done by no less nor lower power than that of God's grace: Its not oratory, as I have said, nor excellency of speech that will do it; its such a work as begets the man again, and actually renews him. The second is drawn from God's end in the way of giving grace, communicating it to some and not to others: If God's end in being gracious to some and not to others, be to commend his grace solely and to make them alone indebted to grace, then the work of grace in conversion must be peculiar and immediate, and wrought by the power of the Spirit of God, leaving nothing to man's free-will to difference himself from another, or on which such an effect should depend: But if we look to scripture, we shall find, that its God's end in the whole way and conduct of his grace, in election, redemption, effectual calling, justification, *&c.* to commend his grace solely, and to stop all mouths, and cut of all ground of boasting in the creature, as it is, 1 Cor. iv. 7. *Who makes thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou didst not receive?* This being certain, that if the work of grace in conversion, were not a distinct, inward, peculiar, real, immediate work, and did not produce the effect of itself by its own strength, and not by virtue of any thing in man; the man would still be supposed to have had some power for the work in himself, and some way to have differenced himself from another; but the Lord hath

designed the contrary, and therefore the work of grace in converſion muſt be ſuitable to his deſign.

Uſe 1. The firſt uſe is for the refutation of ſeveral errors, and for the confirmation of a great truth of the goſpel, which we profeſs.

It ſerves I ſay, Firſt, for the refutation of errors, which in ſuch an auditory we love not to inſiſt on; yet we cannot here, the ground being ſo clear, and the call ſo cogent, forbear to ſay ſomewhat briefly this way, and the rather that the devil hath taken many ways, and driven on many deſigns, to weaken the eſtimation of God's grace among men, and to exalt proud nature; and that there is here a collection and concatenation of thoſe deſigns and ways againſt the truth, which this doctrine holds forth, vented by corrupt men. As, 1. They will have nothing to be neceſſarily applied for the working of converſion, but the preaching of the word; taking it for granted, that all men have univerſal or common grace, which God by his ſovereignty, ſay they, was obliged to give, elſe he could not reaſonably require faith of them; and upon this comes in the pleaded for power of free-will, and man's ability to turn himſelf to God: others by pleading for this notion of a light within men, come to be patrons of proud, petulant and corrupt nature, as if there were need of nothing to beget ſaving faith but that common grace within, and oratory or ſwaſion of mouth from without. And hence they came to maintain the foulеſt errors, which have not only been condemned by the church of God in all ages, but have even by ſome papiſts been abominated; and many of theſe ſame errors are creeping in even in theſe times wherein we live; the deſign whereof is to tempt men to turn looſe, vain, and proud, and to turn the grace of God into wantonneſs; as if they needed not at all to depend on God and his grace, having a ſufficient ſtock within themſelves, on which they can live well enough. And it is not only the errors of Papiſts, Pelagians,

lagians, Socinians, Arminians, or errors in the judgment that we have to do with; but of such, as overturn the very foundation of the work of man's salvation; and who, though pretending to higher notions, do yet go beyond all these. But if it be true, that in the work of conversion, beside the preaching of the word, there is a distinct, real, inward, peculiar, immediate, efficacious work of the Spirit, necessary for bringing about such an effect; then there is no common or universal grace that all the hearers of the gospel have; nor is there any power or ability in man to believe of himself; otherwise there were no necessity of such a work as this for the converting of a sinner: The prophet needed not to cry, *Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* And Christ needed not say, *No man can come to me, except the Father draw him:* For men might come without drawing, and believe without the revelation of God's arm. But in opposition to that, we say, and have made it clear, that the work of conversion is brought about by a distinct, peculiar, powerful, real and immediate work of the Spirit on the heart, whereby he not only enlightens the mind, but renews the will, and rectifies the affections. 2. There is another error that this refutes, which seems to be more subtile; for some will grant a necessary connection betwixt the effect, and the grace of God, who yet say that it is suasion or persuasion (for here we take these for the same,) and so and so circumstanced to prevail with some, that brings about the effect or work of conversion in them, and not in others where that persuasion is not so circumstanced; but this opinion lays not the weight of conversion on the arm of the Lord, but on some circumstances accompanying the work, and leaves still some ground of boasting in the creature. 3. A third error which this doctrine refutes, is that of some others, who will have grace necessarily to go along with the word in the working of faith, but so as

it reacheth not the will, but that the will neceſſarily determines itſelf, as if the will were not corrupt, or as if that corruption that is in the will were indeed no corruption, as if that corruption that is in the will could be any more removed from the will without the immediate work of the Spirit upon it, than darkneſs can be removed from the judgment without the Spirit's immediate work on it: But ſeeing the will is the prime ſeat of man's perverſeneſs while in nature, and the principal part to be renewed; it is a ſtrange thing to ſay, that in the work of converſion, other faculties and powers of the ſoul muſt be renewed, and yet that this which comes neareſt to the life of the ſoul ſhould be neglected, or not ſtand in need of renovation: but from this text it is clear, that in converſion the arm of the Lord muſt be revealed, and that there is a powerful work of grace that not only preſents reaſons from the word to move the will, but really regenerates and renews the will: Now what is for the refutation of theſe errors ſerves alſo to confirm us in the truth of the doctrine oppoſite to theſe.

2. It ſerves to refute ſomething in mens practice, and that is, their little ſenſe of the need of grace; moſt part come and hear ſermons as if they had the habit of faith, and as if it were natural to them, and pretend to the exerciſe of faith, never once ſuſpecting their want of faith, nor thinking that they ſtand in need of ſuch a work of grace to work it in them, as if it were impoſſible for them not to believe; hence many think that they have grace enough, and if they pray, it is that they may do well, never minding the corruption of nature that is in them; and indeed it is no wonder that ſuch perſons fall readily into error, when their practice ſays plainly they think they have grace enough already.

The ſecond *doctrine* is, That this diſtinct, real, inward, efficacious, powerful work of the grace of God in converſion, is not common to all the hearers of the goſpel,

gospel, but is a rare thing applied but to few, and even as rare as faith. And what we touched on to evidence the rarity of faith, will serve also to evidence the rarity of this work of grace in conversion; it is in as many as are believers, and are saved, that the work of grace is revealed, and no more, Jer. iii. 41. *I will take one of a city, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion, saith the Lord;* it is two or three in the corner of a parish, or in the end of a town, to speak so, who are converted, and the rest are suffered to lie in black nature. If the reason hereof be inquired; this might be sufficient to stop all mouths, which the Lord gives, Mat. xi. 28. *Even so Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight;* it is of the Lord, who is debtor to none, and *who*, as it is, Rom. ix. 15. *shews mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardens;* and here we must be silent, and lay our hand on our mouth, and answer no more, all being found guilty; he is just in what he doth, in calling or not calling effectually, as he pleaseth. And yet, *secondly*, The Lord hath thought fit to call few of many, for holy and wise ends. As 1. To hold forth his own sovereignty, and that he is free, and will walk freely in the dispensing of his own grace. Hence, he not only takes few, but ordinarily those that are the most mean, contemptible, silly, and in a manner foolish, of the multitude of hearers; *It is not many noble, not many wise, according to the flesh, not many rich, not many learned*, that he chooseth and converteth, very ordinarily he hides his grace from these; it is but seldom that he calls and takes the stout and valiant man, and the learned scholar, but it is this and that poor man, the weaver, the shoe-maker, the simple plough-man, &c. whom most ordinarily he calls, when he suffers others to continue in their sin. 2. That he may make all the hearers of the gospel walk in holy fear and awe of him, he reveals his grace in few; it is not the multitude that believes, but here one and there one, that

all

all that have the offer of grace may fear leaſt they miſs it and receive it in vain, and may be careful to entertain and make right uſe of the means of grace, and may withal cheriſh the ſpirit in his motions, and not grieve him. O! if ye knew and believed what a rare thing the work of the ſpirit of grace is, ye would be fear'd to quench, extinguiſh, or put out any of his motions. 3. As to the godly, he does thus, to make them admire, adore, and praiſe his grace, and the power of it ſo much the more.

The *uſes* are three. 1. It ſerves to move all to reverence, adore, and admire the grace of God, and his ſovereign way in it; preſume not to debate or diſpute with him, becauſe they are few that believe, and few that he hath determined his grace for; it is an evidence of his dread, a proof of his ſovereignty, in which he ſhould be ſilently ſtooped unto, and reverently adored, and not diſputed with; we ought to bound all our reaſoning within his good pleaſure, who might have taken many, and left few, or taken none as pleaſed him; and we ſhould not think ſtrange, nor fret that the goſpel is powerful but on few, here is the reaſon of it that may quiet us, the Lord hath determined effectually to call but few, and yet he will not want one of his own; *All that the Father hath given to Chriſt ſhall come to him*, though none come but as they are *drawn*. A thing that we ſhould be ſenſible of, but yet calm and quiet our ſpirits, rather wondering that he hath choſen and called none, than fret becauſe he hath paſt by many.

Uſe 2. The ſecond uſe is to exhort you that are hearers of the goſpel, and have not had this diſtinct and powerful work of grace begetting faith in you, to be perſuaded of this truth, that faith and the work of grace is no common thing. The moſt part, alas! think that they have grace, and that it is not one of many that want it, they will readily ſay, it is true I cannot believe of myſelf, but God hath given me the grace.

grace. But I would ask you this question, Do you think that grace is so common a thing that it comes to you, and ye never knew how, or so common that never a body wants it? If not, how cometh it then to pass that ye think and speak of grace as ye do? We would think it a great length, if many of you could be persuaded of your gracelesness. It is not our part to point particularly at the man and woman, though the deeds of many of you say within our heart, that there is no fear of God before your eyes, and that many of you think ye have grace who never had it; and therefore we would say these three or four things to you. 1. Begin and suspect yourselves that matters are not right betwixt God and you, we bid none of you despair, but we bid the most part of you be suspicious of your condition; suspect, nay, be assured, that hypocrisy is not grace, and that your presumption is not faith; for if but few get grace, then many should suspect themselves, and seeing grace is so rare a thing, do not ye think it common. 2. Neglect no means that may bring you through grace to believe, but be diligent in the use of them all, of the word, prayer, sacraments, meditations, *&c.* It is by these that the Lord begets grace, and by neglecting them, ye may make yourselves guilty of destroying your own souls. 3. Beware of quenching the Spirit in any of his operations or motions, of smothering or putting out any challenges or convictions. If the conscience be at any time touched, or the affections tickled, go not away as the temporary believer doth, sitting down there without going any further. Fear to strangle the beginnings of the life of grace, for grace may begin at little; and if you quench any motion, conviction, or challenge, ye know not if ever ye shall meet with the like again; because when he knocked hard at your heart, ye held him out and keeped him at the door; and ye may be in hazard of that terrible charge, Acts vii. 31. *Ye uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye have always.*

ways reſiſted the Holy Ghoſt; as your fathers did, ſo do ye. 4. Seeing this work is not common to all hearers of the goſpel, but peculiar to ſome, labour to have it made ſure to yourſelves, by putting it to proof and trial in good earneſt.

Uſe 3. The third uſe is for you that are believers, (and would God there were many ſuch,) to whom I would alſo ſpeak three or four words. 1. Learn from this to be humble. *What haſt thou, man, but what thou haſt received? and if thou haſt received it, why doſt thou boaſt, as if thou hadſt not received it?* O! but it is unſuitable to believers who are free-graces-debtors and beggars (whereof yet none need to think ſhame,) to be proud and forget themſelves: Thou haſt nothing, believer, to boaſt of, but that he hath favoured thee with his grace; and ſhouldeſt thou be proud of that, as if thou had made thyſelf thus? Therefore guard watchfully againſt all puffing up, ſelf-conceit, and high-mindedneſs, and ſtudy to be humble, and to carry a low ſail, elſe thou mayeſt break out into ſome ſcandalous offence, and may become a ſhame and reproach to the goſpel. We commend humility to you above many things; for we think that in theſe days, pride is like to break their necks; for when once conceit creeps in, they begin to think they are ſo far advanced in holineſs, that they muſt not keep company with others, nor join in worſhip with them; and from that they go to another thing, and from that to a third, that it is hard to tell where they will halt or end; they grow ſo giddy, that they are ſcarce like to leave ſo much ground as themſelves may ſtand upon. O! be aſhamed of pride, it is a moſt intolerable thing to be proud of that which God hath given, wherein ye have no more hand, and whereof ye can no more boaſt, than they who never had it. 2. Be thankful and give God the praiſe of what ye have gotten; *It beomes the upright to be thankful.* It is not a little matter to have God's power manifeſted in the working of faith and con-

conferring grace; the temporal throne and kingdom, and great things in the world, are nothing to this, it is peculiar to the Lord's own, and not common: many get their fill of the world, who never get, nor will get this; the world is of so little value with the Lord, that to speak so, he doth not much regard who get it, though it be exactly distributed by his providence, but converting and confirming grace is peculiar to his favourites; being therefore clear that he hath bestowed grace on you, O how should ye exult in blessing God, as David did, for giving you counsel to make choice of such a portion, and for his powerful determining your heart by his grace to embrace it, for which ye have not yourselves to thank, but God. 3. Be compassionate and tender towards others, considering that it is only grace that hath made the difference betwixt you and them, and not any good nature in you, which was not in them as some foolishly fancy. Be not puft up at the faults and falls of any, but rather mourn for them as well as for your own, and be the more humble when ye think of the difference that grace hath made, lest ye fall; and since your standing is by grace, be not high-minded, but fear. Of all persons it worst becomes you to be unconcerned, and much less to mock at the falls of others, considering who, and what hath made the difference. 4. If it be so peculiar a privilege to be partakers of this powerful and special grace of God that is put forth in the great work of conversion, then sure there is something peculiar called for in your conversation, even that it may in all things be as it becometh the gospel, and answerable to this grace bestowed on you. O! what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

SERMON XIV.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

——*And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

THE way of the grace of God is a very difficult ſubject to be thought on, or ſpoken of ſuitably, and as it becomes us, grace having a ſovereign and unſearchable channel of its own wherein it runs; yet no doubt it is very uſeful now and then to conſider it, if we knew how to make uſe of it aright; yea, even theſe ſteps of grace that are moſt croſs and contrary to carnal reaſon, may not a little profit when duly pondered. Thus when the prophet hath been looking on the ſcarcity of faith, and on the paucity of true believers, he looks a little further than on the external preaching of the goſpel, even upon the way of God's grace, not out of any curioſity, nor from a fretting humour, becauſe of the unſucceſsfulneſs of his miniſtry, but that he may thereby get himſelf ſtayed and compoſed; and that he may bring both himſelf and others, to reverence and adore the holy and ſovereign way of God therein: *To whom*, ſaith he, *is the arm of the Lord revealed?* It is a word like that which Chriſt had on the like occaſion, John vi. 44. *Murmur not among yourſelves, no man can come to me, except the Father who hath ſent me, draw him.*

We opened up the meaning of the words the laſt day: In ſhort they come to this, as if he had ſaid, how few are they that believe the goſpel, and who take the word from his ſent miniſters? And how few are they on whom the grace of God, that only can make men believe, does effectually work? The prophet points at a higher

a higher hand than that of the miniſters in the ſucceſs and fruitfulneſs of the goſpel, and couples theſe two together, the preaching of the word, and the power of God's grace, in the working of faith and converſion in ſinners.

We propoſed theſe three doctrines to be ſpoken to from the words. 1. That in the work of converſion and begetting of faith, beſides the preaching of the word, there is a powerful, internal, immediate work of the grace of God, exerciſed within mens hearts, as well as the word preached outwardly to the ear; whereever faith is begotten, theſe two go together, the word without, and the power of grace within, the one of which is diſtinct from the other.

2. That this powerful, internal, and immediate work of grace within, is not common to all the hearers of the goſpel, but a rare, and peculiar thing to ſome, *to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* It is but one or few of many to whom it is revealed: To theſe we have ſpoken already.

3. The third is (which indeed holds out the ſcope of all) that there is an inſeparable connexion betwixt theſe two, the begetting of faith in the hearers of the goſpel, and the application of this powerful work of the grace of God for working of it; ſo that where this powerful work of grace is not, there is neither faith nor converſion wrought; and where this powerful work of grace is, there is faith and converſion. The prophet makes them reciprocal and commenſurable: Who is the believer? He to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed: And who is the unbeliever? He to whom the arm of the Lord is not revealed. Theſe two are ſo conjoined and knit together, as they are never ſeparated, and ſo they muſt ſtand or fall together.

That we may be the more clear, we ſhall explain the doctrine in two diſtinct branches. The firſt whereof is; that except the powerful work of God's grace

concur, the moſt powerful preaching of the goſpel will never beget faith in the hearts of hearers. The ſecond is, that wherever this powerful work of grace goes along with the preaching of the goſpel, or wherever the Lord applies his grace with the word preached, there faith is begotten in the heart; and that ſoul is effectually united to Chriſt, and ſavingly changed: the one of theſe branches ſerves to ſhew the neceſſity of God's grace from the conſideration of our ſinfulneſs and impotency or inability, and of the emptineſs and ineffectualneſs of all outward means in themſelves, and ſo to ſtop mens mouths, as being utterly unable to contribute any thing to their own ſpiritual good or converſion, that being the product of the grace of God. The other branch ſerves mightily to commend the grace of God, as being the powerful arm of the Lord that brings to believe, that calls and converts ſuch and ſuch perſons, according to a prior engagement and tranſaction betwixt the Father and the Son.

As for the firſt of theſe, it will eaſily be believed among men and women, that have any true ſenſe and feeling of the corruption of their nature, and find daily ſomewhat of the law of the members warring againſt the law of the mind: and we are perſuaded, if all that ever received faith were brought to depoſe in this matter, they would bear witneſs, that there is no means that without the effectual power of the grace of God, can bring a ſinner to cloſe with Chriſt, and believe on him: and if all that are now before the throne of God in heaven, were called to ſpeak to this great truth, they would put their great ſeal to it, and ſay, *Not unto us, but to thy name be the glory of our believing; we had never believed, if it had been left to the power of our own free-will; and if the power of thy grace had not wrought in us the very will as well as the deed or act of believing.* Yet becauſe this doctrine (as we ſaid) ſerves to diſcover the ſinfulneſs and impotency

cy of nature, and how little we are obliged to it in the work of faith and converſion, and to hold forth withal the emptineſs and ineffectualneſs of all outward means without this grace; and becauſe it meets with conſiderable oppoſition from the enemies of the truth, we ſhall give you ſome grounds for confirmation of it. The firſt whereof is drawn from theſe expreſs inſtances of ſcripture, wherein it is clear, that there hath been much powerful preaching, and by the moſt eminent preachers, and yet the generality of people have been fruitleſs under it, and their fruitleſneſs hath been aſcribed to this very ground, to wit, that the work of God's grace and his out ſtretched arm went not along with it. The firſt inſtance is *Deut.* xxvi. 4. That *Moſes* was a ſkilful preacher, who will deny? he being faithful in all the houſe of God; yet, ſays he, after much and long preaching, and after many ſigns and wonders wrought, *the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, nor eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear unto this day:* where he not only puts a difference betwixt the preaching of the word without, and the work of grace within, but ſhows the neceſſity of the concurrence of the work of grace, and lays the great weight of the people's profiting or not profiting, on the wanting or having of that. A ſecond inſtance is in this prophet Iſaiah; were there any among all the preachers before or ſince, that preached in a more evangelic ſtrain than he did? and yet when he hath complained of the fewneſs of believers, ſaying, *Who hath believed our report?* He fixes and ſtays on this as the cauſe, *To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* And chap. vi. 9, 10. He gives an account of the ſad commiſſion he had from the Lord, who ſaid to him, *Go and tell the people: Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not, make the heart of this people fat,* &c. Where there is alſo a clear diſtinction made betwixt the inward working of grace, and the outward miniſtry. A third inſtance, and one that is

beyond

beyond all exception, is in our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, *who ſpake as never man ſpoke*, and preached with ſuch power and life, that even carnal hearers *wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, for he preached with authority, and not as the Scribes;* and yet John vi. 44. when they begin to murmur at him, what ſays he? *Murmur not at theſe things; none can come unto me, except the Father draw him:* None can believe, except the powerful grace of God work faith in him, there muſt be a higher hand than ought you ſee or hear; a more powerful work than any external preaching of mine, as prophet of my church, e'er a ſoul can believe on me: And though his hearers were not free of the guilt of this their unbelief, but had there own ſinful acceſſion unto their continuing in it; yet your Lord looks on the ſovereign way and work of grace, and holds there, telling them that his external miniſtry will not do; but there muſt be an inward, powerful, immediate work of grace for the working of faith. We add a fourth inſtance, and it is of that choſen veſſel Paul who laboured more abundantly than all the reſt of the apoſtles; and yet when he is preaching, Acts xxviii. 25. *and ſome believed, and others believed not*, before he diſmiſſes the multitude, he adds this one word; *Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt by Iſaiah the prophet unto our fathers, ſaying, Go unto this people, and ſay, hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand; and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and not perceive*, &c. where he expreſly makes a difference betwixt his external preaching, and God's inward working; and tells us, that ſo long as there was a judicial ſtroke on the hearts of the people not taken away; no external preaching could work their converſion, and bring them to believe; which he alſo does to guard againſt any offence that might be taken at the unſucceſsfulneſs of his miniſtry, by thoſe who would be ready to ſay, what ails theſe people that they will not receive the goſpel? To whom he anſwers; Iſaiah long before told the

the reaſon of it, to wit, that there is a plague on their hearts and minds, which God muſt remove e'er they can receive it.

2. To theſe plain and clear inſtances we may add two or three grounds or reaſons. As 1. The exceeding greatneſs of the work of converſion, O how great and difficult is it! Therefore it is ſet out by the ſimilitudes and expreſſions of *raiſing the dead*, *creating a new heart*, *of removing the ſtony heart*, and the like; all tending to ſet out the neceſſity of an omnipotent power, or a powerful work of grace, in the begetting of ſouls to Chriſt: And if it be ſo great a work, what can the outward miniſtry do, if the power of God be not added? Or what can the man himſelf do here? Can a man quicken, raiſe, create, or beget himſelf? It is true, theſe comparifons are not to be extended and applied in every reſpect; yet they hold out, that man being naturally dead, can no more contribute to his own quickening and raiſing, and to the begetting of ſpiritual life in himſelf, than a dead man can contribute to his own quickening and raiſing to his natural life; for which cauſe, the Holy Ghoſt hath made choice of theſe expreſſions, even to hold out the exceeding greatneſs of the work. 2. Conſider the condition that men are in, when this work is wrought; and we may ſee they can contribute nothing to it, that they have no aptitude for it, except that they are ſubjects capable to be wrought upon, being as it is, Eph. ii. 1. *dead in ſins and treſpaſſes*: Being as to their ſouls eſtate, and as to their ſpiritual condition, like Adam's body before the Lord breathed in it the breath of life, and made him a living ſoul; as his body could not move, ſtir, nor act till then, no more can the natural man ſtir or act in the ways of God, till a new principle of ſpiritual life be put in him. To clear it further, we would conſider, that the ſcripture ſpeaks of theſe three in the natural man. 1. Of an utter inability and deadneſs, as to that which is good; *dead*

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in ſins, Eph. ii. 1. *We are not ſufficient* (ſaith the apoſtle, 2 Cor. iii. 5.) *of ourſelves, as of ourſelves, to think any good thing*, not ſo much as a good thought. 2. The ſcripture holds him not only as unable for good, but perverſe and bent to every thing that is evil, Col. i. 21. *Alienated and enemies in our own minds by wicked works; the carnal mind being enmity againſt God*, Rom. viii. 7. it is plainly oppoſite to any thing that is good, and ſo to the way of faith. 3. Man's mind is not only naturally perverſe and ſtuffed with enmity, but in an incapacity to be healed while it remaineth ſuch, Rom. viii. 7. *It is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;* and therefore in the work of converſion, there is not only an amending, but alſo a renewing of our nature called for; there is more requiſite than the rectifying of ſomething in the man, even the creating of new habits, and the infuſing of the principles of ſpiritual life and motion into the ſoul. It is true, in ſome ſenſe the whole image of God is not abſolutely removed, the faculties of the rational ſoul ſtill remain; for man hath an underſtanding and a will, and ſome ſort of reaſon, but without any tendency to ſpiritual life, or to any action for God: He hath an underſtanding, but it is wholly darkened: he hath a will, but wholly perverſe, and not in the leaſt inclined to good: he hath affections, but wholly diſordered and corrupted, and ſet wholly upon wrong objects; ſo that it is with man's ſoul as to good, as it is with ſpoiled wine: Wine when wholeſome, ſerves to cheer and refreſh, but when it is ſpoiled, it is quite another thing, not only not conducing to health, but it is noiſome and hurtful. It is juſt ſo with man's ſoul, it is by the fall quite ſpoiled and corrupted; it is not indeed annihilated or made to be nothing, for it retains the ſame faculties ſtill, it hath, to ſpeak ſo, the ſame *quantity* ſtill; but as to its *qualities*, it is utterly corrupted and carried quite contrary to God; *It is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be;*

and

and renovation by grace, is the taking away of the corrupt qualities in part of this life, and wholly in the other life, and the bringing in of new qualities for recovering the beauty of that image of God which man hath loſt. 4. Conſider the end that God hath in the adminiſtration of his grace, and the glory that he will needs have it get in every gracious work: and more eſpecially in the work of converſion, and the ſilence, as to any boaſting that he will have all put unto that ſhall partake of it: His end in the adminiſtration of his grace, is to bring down pride, to ſtop all mouths, and to remove all grounds of boaſting from the creature, that he only may have the glory of converſion; that whenever that queſtion is propoſed, *What haſt thou O man, but what thou haſt received? And if thou haſt received it, why doeſt thou boaſt? Who made thee to differ from another?* The ſoul may anſwer, it was not external preaching, nor my own free-will, nor any thing in me, but the power of God's grace; I have nothing but what I have received. It is on this ground that the apoſtle Phil. ii. 12, 13. preſſeth and encourageth Chriſtians to their great work, *Work out*, ſaith he, *your own ſalvation in fear and trembling, for its God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure:* The Lord leaveth not to man the working of the will in himſelf; *and of him*, ſaith the ſame apoſtle, 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. *are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who is made of God unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption; that he that glorieth ſhould glory in the Lord*, as he ſaid before, v. 29. *that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence:* There is one ground of boaſting that the Lord will have removed in a ſinner's juſtification, and obtaining the pardon of ſin by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; but there is another ground or matter of boaſting, that man might have, if he could reach out the hand to believe and receive that righteouſneſs, and ſo put a difference betwixt himſelf and another, which in effectual calling

the Lord puts to ſilence and quite removes; that man may have it to ſay, I have not only pardon of ſin, but grace to believe, freely beſtowed on me; God made me to differ, and he only; he opened my heart as he did the heart of Lydia. Thus the Lord will have all the weight of the whole work of our ſalvation lie on his grace, that the mouths of all may be ſtopped, and that his grace may ſhine gloriouſly, that we may have it to ſay with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. lvii. 2. *It is the Lord that performs all things for me;* and with Paul, 1 Tim. i. 14. *I obtained mercy, and the grace of God was exceeding abundant towards me.*

The Uſes are theſe. 1. It writes to us in great and legible letters the great emptineſs and ſinfulneſs of all fleſh, who not only do no good, but have ſinned themſelves out of a capacity to do good; all men and women have brought themſelves thus lamentably low by ſin, that now if heaven were to be had by a wiſh ſincerely and ſingly brought forth, yet it is not in their power to perform that condition; and though it now ſtands upon the ſtretching forth of the hand of faith to receive Jeſus Chriſt, yet of themſelves they cannot even do this. How then ought ſinners to be deeply humbled, who have brought themſelves to this woful paſs? I am afraid that many of you do not believe that ye are ſuch as cannot believe, nor do any good till his grace work effectually in you.

2. It teacheth you not to idolize any inſtrument or means of grace, how precious and promiſing ſoever. No preaching, if it were of a prophet, or an apoſtle, yea, of an angel, will do the buſineſs, except grace come with it; there is a neceſſity of the revelation of God's arm, and of the aſſiſtance of his grace, not only to your converſion, but to every duty ye go about; ye ſhould therefore fear and tremble when ye go about any ordinance, leſt the arm of the Lord be not put forth in it.

3. It ſhould make you more ſerious in dealing with God

God for his effectual bleſſing to every means and ordinance, ſeeing without that no ordinance can profit you.

4. It ſerves to reprove and repreſs pride, and to promote humility in all ſuch who have gotten good by the goſpel. Have ye faith, or any meaſure of holineſs? What have ye but what ye have received? from whence came your faith and your holineſs; ye have them not of yourſelves; theſe are not fruits that grow upon the tree of nature, or in its garden; but on the tree, and in the garden of free-grace, and ye are not to thank yourſelves for them?

5. The main Uſe of it is for confirming and eſtabliſhing you in the faith of truth propoſed in the doctrine, and for confuting and overturning the contrary error, that, in contempt of the grace of God, exalts proud nature, and gives man's free-will ſo great a hand in the work of converſion; that the main thing that makes the difference ſhall not be attributed to the grace of God, but to the free-will of the creature, which of itſelf chooſed the grace of God offered when another rejected it. It may indeed ſeem ſtrange that the devil ſhould ſo far have prevailed with Chriſtians that profeſs the faith of original ſin, and of the neceſſity of a Saviour, as to make them look at grace as uſeleſs in this prime ſtep of converſion and renewing of a ſinner, that when the grace of God and man's free will come to be compared, man's will ſhould have the preference and preheminence, the higheſt place and commendation in the work, and that the great weight of it ſhould ly there, and that proud nature ſhould be thus bolſtered up, that it ſhall ſtand in need of nothing for the man's converſion, but making the right uſe of what it hath in itſelf; And yet it's no wonder that the devil drive this deſign vigorouſly, for what ſhorter cut can there be taken by him to ruin ſouls, than to make them drink in this error, that nature and free-will will do their turn?

and so take them off from all dependance on free-grace, and on Jesus Christ, and give them ground of boasting in themselves; for when it is thus, of necessity they must ruin and perish; this should sure, make you loath this error the more; and we are perswaded, that the day is coming, wherein the truth opposite to this error shall be confirmed on the souls and consciences of all the opposers of it, and wherein the maintaining of this error shall be found a confirmation of man's enmity to God's grace, which is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be.

But there are three questions that may be moved here, to which we would speak a word. 1. If the preaching of the gospel cannot beget faith, without the powerful work of God's grace, what is the use of the gospel, or wherefore serves it? 2. If men cannot believe without the work of grace, which the Lord sovereignly dispenseth, why doth he yet find fault and expostulate with men for their not believing? 3. If grace performs all, and men can make no means effectual, nor do any good without it, what then should men do to come by a believing frame, and this work of his grace?

For the first, We shall not say much to it; only, seeing the Lord hath made choice of the gospel to be the ordinary external means of grace, and of the begetting of faith, there is no reason to say that it is useless; for though it be not the main and only thing that turns the sinner, but the Lord hath reserved it to himself as his own prerogative, to convert and change the heart of a rebel-sinner; yet he hath appointed it to be made use of, as he hath appointed baptism and the Lord's supper, for many good and notable ends, uses and advantages that are reached and come at by the preaching of it. As, 1. By it the righteousness of God is manifested that before lay hid. Ye may by the preaching of the gospel come to the knowledge of the covenant of redemption and of the great design that

that the Lord hath laid down for bringing about the salvation of lost sinners, Rom. i. 17. *Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.* 2. By it the Lord revealeth the duty he calleth for from men, as well as his will concerning their justification and salvation; he lets them know what is wrong, what is right, what displeaseth him, and what pleaseth him. Yea, 3. By the preaching of the gospel, he holdeth out what men's ability, or rather what their inability is, and by his external calling gives them occasion to know the necessity of a Mediator, and to seek after another way of justification than by their own works; for so it proves a notable mean to humble men, to stop their mouths, and to make them plead guilty before God. 4. Its profitable as the Lord is pleased to make use of it to call and gather in so many as he hath ordained to eternal life; for tho' in itself it be not able to convert, without having the power of God going along with it, it is the instrument of conversion, and the Lord ordinarly makes use of it to the begetting of faith in them that believe; as Rom. x. 17. *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God* preached, and 1 Cor. i. 24. it is called *the power of God to salvation;* and *it hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe;* for though God can work without it, yet he hath thought good to make use of it, to inform the judgment, and to stir up the affections of hearers, and so it proves instrumental to the begetting of faith in them. 5. If it do not promote the salvation of all the hearers of it, yet it promotes it in all the elect, and serves to make others the more inexcusable, and in this respect it *triumphs always*, 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. In some it is *the savour of life unto life;* in others, *the savour of death unto death*, leaving them the more inexcusable, and the more obnoxious to wrath by their rejecting the counsel of God against themselves.

I know this will be excepted against; we come therefore

therefore to consider the second question, which is this, How can the call of the gospel make men inexcusable, seeing they cannot without the effectual power of the grace of God believe? As Christ saith, John vi. 44. *No man can come to me*, that is, no man can believe in me, *except the Father who hath sent me draw him;* yea, why doth God find fault with men for their unbelief? for answer, It is no new thing for men to start questions and objections against the grace of God, and to be always striving to rub affronts and disgrace upon it; see Rom. ix. 13, 14, *&c.* where this same objection is started, and answered again and again; for when the apostle hath said, ver. 13. *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*, the objection is moved, *Is there unrighteousness with God then?* men readily think that there is a sort of unrighteousness in God, when he takes one and leaves another, especially considering, that the leaving of the other infers (though it be not any culpable cause) the ruin of the man's soul; he answers *first* with a *God forbid;* as if it were an absurd thing so to assert; and then endeavours to answer it from God's sovereignty, as being debtor to none, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy;* and *it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that shews mercy.* In God's administration of grace, he is debtor to no man, nor hath he any rule by which he proceeds, but his own sovereign will; and if it shall yet be said, if God doth walk by his own sovereign will in giving grace, *Why doth he yet find fault*, or condemn, *for who hath resisted his will?* Why is God angry that men will not believe, since none can come to Christ against the will of God? his indignation riseth at this proud and petulant objection, and he answers, *But who art thou, O man, that replieſt against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of the same lump, one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour?*

our? By the apoſtle's doubling this anſwer, and his not ſetting himſelf to ſatisfy carnal reaſon and curioſity, there is ground given to ſilence us here. It is the Lord, he is our potter, and we the clay; it is he in whoſe hand we are, who can do us no wrong; and this may ſufficiently ſerve to put a ſtop to all reaſoning and diſputing againſt him; yet we may add a word further, ſeeing the apoſtle proceeds to another reaſon; therefore, 2. Conſider whence it is that this inability to believe or turn to God doth come; not from God, ſure; for if he had not made man perfect, there might be ſome ground for the objection; but ſeeing *he did make man upright, and he hath ſought out many inventions*, who is to be blamed? Hath the Lord loſt his right to exact his debt, becauſe man hath played the bankrupt, is debauched, turned inſolvent, and unable to pay? Doth not this very objection prove us guilty, and evidence that we have loſt that which God gave us and made us with at the beginning? When God made Adam, he had power to believe and give God credit as to every word revealed or to be revealed, and that now after the fall, he and his poſterity want that power, they have not this privation from God's creating them, but from their fall, by which they became utterly uncapable for theſe duties that they owe to God, and for this among the reſt. 5. If there were no more but ſimple inability among them that hear this goſpel, they might have ſome pretext or ground of excuſe, tho' it were not any real or juſt excuſe, as hath been ſhewed, but it never comes to this as the only or main cauſe of their not believing. There is always ſome maliciouſneſs, perverſeneſs, and pravity in the will; it's not *I cannot* but *I will not;* it's a wilful and ſome way deliberate rejecting of the goſpel, that is the ground of mens not believing; and what excuſe, I pray, can ye have, who do not believe the goſpel, when it ſhall be found that ye maliciouſly and deliberately

ately chose to reject it? to make this out, consider but these few things. 1. Men's neglecting of the very outward means, that through God's blessing prove instrumental in the begetting of faith, as hearing, reading, prayer, meditation, self-searching, stirring up themselves to repentance, &c. whereby the Lord ordinarily brings about and furthers the work of faith. 2. Consider the carnal, careless, and lazy manner of mens going about those means and duties, which to their own conviction are within the reach of that power which they have; ye might hear oftener and more attentively, ye might pray more frequently and more seriously than ye do, ye want even much of that moral seriousness in hearing, prayer, reading, &c. that ye have in other things of less concernment; ye will hear a proclamation at the cross with more attention than a preached gospel; ye will hear a threatning from man with more fear than ye will hear a threatning from God's word; ye will be more serious in seeking somewhat from man, than in asking grace from God; the reason is, because your heart is more to the one than to the other. Can ye then rationally think that ye are excusable, when believing is not in your heart and thoughts, but ye go about the means that lead to it unconcernedly, carelessly, and negligently? 3. Consider how often ye do willingly choose some other thing than Christ, to spend your time and set your affections upon, laying obstructions and bars in the way of God's grace, setting up idols in the heart, and filling Christ's room before-hand with such things as are inconsistent with his company, and all this is done willingly and deliberately; ye have said in your hearts as those did, Jer. ii. 25. *We have loved strangers, and after them we will go:* And will ye, or dare ye make that an excuse why ye could not come to Christ, because your hearts were taken up with your lusts and idols? So then the matter will not hold here, that ye are unable, and had not power to believe, but it will come to this, that your

your conſcience muſt ſay, that ye willingly and deliberately choſe to lie ſtill in your unbelief, and that ye preferred your idols to Chriſt Jeſus. 4. Conſider, that ſometimes ye have met with ſome more than an ordinary touch, motion, and work of the Spirit that hath been born in upon you, which ye have ſlighted and neglected, if not quenched and put out, which is your great guilt before the Lord. Is there any of you, but now and then at hearing ſermons, or when in ſome great hazard, or under ſickneſs, or ſome other ſad croſs, ye have been under convictions of ſin, and have had ſome little glances of the hazard ye were in of the wrath of God, more than ordinarily ye had at other times; and I would aſk you, Have theſe been entertained and cheriſhed, or rather have they not been ſlighted and worn out by you? and may ye not in this reſpect be charged with the guilt of reſiſting the Spirit of God, and marring the work of your own converſion and ſalvation? Theſe things, and many more, which will cry loud in the conſciences of men and women one day, will quite remove and take away this objection, *That ye could not do better;* ye might have done better than ye did, ye might have abſtained from many evils that ye committed, and done many duties that ye omitted, and done them with more moral ſerioufneſs than ye did; but ye were perverſe, and did willingly and deliberately chooſe to continue in your natural condition, rejecting Chriſt, and the offer of ſalvation through him: This alſo ſerves to refute and remove that profane principle or tenet that many have in their minds and mouths, *That they have no more grace than God hath given them;* will ye dare to come before God at the great day with any ſuch objection? No, certainly, or if ye dare, God will aggravate your guilt by it, and beat it back again into your throat. Then, O! then all ſuch ſubterfuges will be no ſhelter to you before him, nor in the leaſt able to intrench your ſouls againſt the ſtrong bat-

teries of the wrath of God, that will be as a ſtorm againſt the wall.

SERMON XV.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

——*And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

MINISTERS have not done with their work when they have preached, and people have not done with their work when they have heard: that which is of greateſt concernment follows, which either in the want of it, has influence on the fadning of both miniſter and people, or in the obtaining of it, has influence on their conſolation: This is the thing that we find Iſaiah upon here, who having preached the goſpel, looks what fruit it had in his own time, and ſhould have in our time, it grieves him exceedingly; and indeed it is very ſad that Iſaiah ſhould be ſo much grieved in foreſeeing the unfruitfulneſs of the goſpel in our days, and that we ourſelves ſhould be ſo little grieved with it, and ſo fenſeleſs under it.

He caſts in this word, *To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* partly to confirm the former word, *Who hath believed our report?* and partly to help us to make the right uſe of it, by drawing men to the diſcovery of the ſovereign hand of God in the matter, and of the neceſſity of his grace for making the goſpel effectual in the hearers of it wherever it comes, *Who*, ſaith he, *hath believed our report?* To whom is this preached goſpel made effectual for faith and ſalvation? it is but to very few, even to as many as have the arm of the Lord, the effectual power of his ſpecial grace revealed to them, and no more.

The

The laſt *doctrine* we propoſed, and began to ſpeak of as the ſcope, was, that believing and receiving of the goſpel, and the Lord's exerting a powerful work of his grace with it, are ever joined together; they are of equal extent, as many believe as he ſtretches out his hand of power with the word to work faith in them, and as many lie ſtill in unbelief as his hand of power is not revealed unto; this is his ſcope.

We opened this *doctrine* in two branches, *Firſt*, That the moſt powerful means cannot work nor beget faith in the hearers of the goſpel, except there be an inward powerful work of grace on their hearts accompanying them; and this we cleared, and ſpake a little to two *queſtions* in the *uſe*, and left off at a third, to wit, what the hearers of the goſpel ſhould do that have the call and offer of the goſpel, ſeeing without the effectual work of the grace of God they cannot believe? which we ſhall forbear to ſpeak to, till we open the ſecond branch of the *doctrine;* becauſe this queſtion relates to both.

The ſecond branch then of the *doctrine* is, That wherever the Lord applieth the powerful work of his grace, there neceſſarily faith and converſion follow; or the ſtretching forth of God's arm in the work of his grace, hath always the work of faith and converſion, and the engaging of the ſoul unto Jeſus Chriſt following it; and indeed if it be true, as we ſaid, that there are as many unbelievers as there are perſons on whom grace doth not thus powerfully work, or that they are all ſuch that this work of grace is not manifeſted on, then the work of converſion and believing is as broad as this work of grace: for the prophet maketh them of equal extent, who is he that believeth? even he to whom the arm of the Lord is revealed; and on the contrary, who is he that believeth not? even he to whom the arm of the Lord is not revealed, and on whom this work of grace is not manifeſted. By which we may ſee it to be very clear, that the prophet

puts the believing of the gospel on the Lord's manifesting his arm; so that where it is not manifested, this work of faith is not brought forth; and where it is manifested it is necessarily brought forth.

This being a doctrine concerning the efficacy of of God's grace, which ought not to lie hid from the Lord's people, we shall a little, first, clear it, and then secondly, confirm it to you.

First, for clearing of its meaning. 1. Ye must not take our meaning so, as if we made every common work, that lively means may have on the hearers of the gospel, to be conversion. The preaching of the word will sometimes make people tremble, as we see in Felix, and raise convictions and terrors in them, and put them into an amazement, and yet leave them there: For all these convictions may be, and are often resisted, as to any saving fruit at least. This we conceive to be what Stephen points at, Acts vii. 51. while he saith, *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost as your fathers did, so do ye:* And what he means by this, is explained in the words following, *which of the prophets have not your Fathers persecuted*, &c. even their contending with the word of the Lord in the mouths of his servants: Yea, in that same place, where it is said, *They gnashed upon him with their teeth:* its insinuated, that they came over the belly of the cutting conviction, which his sermons had fastened upon them. Nor do we, 2. Mean that every common operation of the Spirit, whether illumination of the mind, or a touch on the affections (such as may be in temporary believers and apostates, as is clear, Mat. xiii. 20, 21. Heb. vi. 4. and downward) is conversion: there is a great difference betwixt a common work or gift of the Spirit (which in a large sense may be called *grace* because freely given) and the saving work of grace, which before we called a peculiar work: and oft-times that common operation of the Spirit is quenched and put out;

out; therefore the apoſtle, 1 Theſſ. v. 19. exhorteth thus, *Quench not the Spirit.* 3. When we ſpeak of an effectual bringing forth of faith by this grace of God, we would not have you think, that we ſuppoſe no reluctancy to be in man in ſo far as he is unrenewed; for though where grace effectually worketh, faith follows neceſſarily, yet corruption being in the man, it is diſpoſed and apt to thwart with, and to oppoſe grace, and the will hath its averſeneſs to yield. But the meaning of the doctrine is this, that though there be ſuch a ſtrong power of corruption in the man to whom grace comes, and on whom it is put forth; yet the power of grace is ſuch, that it powerfully maſters and overcomes corruption, and wins, the heart to believe in, and to engage with Chriſt, though (to ſpeak ſo) there be ſomething within that ſtrives to keep the door ſhut on Chriſt; yet when it comes to that, Cant. v. iii. *He puts in his fingers by the hole of the lock, and makes the myrrhe to drop:* The heart is prevailed with ſo, as it is effectually opened, as the heart of Lydia was to receive the word that Paul preached. Thus, notwithſtanding corruption's oppoſition, grace gains its point; and the Lord never applies his grace on purpoſe to gain a ſoul, but he prevails. 4. When we ſpeak of the power and effectualneſs of grace in conquering and gaining the heart and will of the ſinner to believe in Chriſt Jeſus, we do not mean that there is any force or violence done to the will, or any exerting of a co-active power, forceing the will contrary to its eſſential property of freedom, to cloſe with Chriſt: but this we mean, that though corruption be in the heart, yet grace being infuſed and acted by the Spirit, the pravity in the will is ſweetly cured, and the will is moved and made to will willingly and upon choice, by the power of the Spirit of grace taking in the ſtrong hold. This great work is wrought by an omnipotent ſweetneſs, and by a ſweet omnipotency: and it needs not at all ſeem ſtrange;

ſtrange; for if a man in nature, be by the power of habitual corruption, made neceſſarily to will evil, ſo that notwithſtanding he doth freely and willingly chuſe evil: why ſhould it be thought ſtrange or abſurd to ſay, that when a principle of the grace of God is infuſed into the ſoul, and acted by the Spirit of God, it hath ſo much influence, power, and efficacy as to prevail with the will, it keeping ſtill its own freedom, to make it willing to embrace Jeſus Chriſt, and yet not at all thereby wrong that eſſential property of of the will? Sure, grace is as powerful as corruption, and the Lord is as dexterous a worker, and can work as agreeably to the nature of the creature in this gracious work, as the creature can in its own ſinful actings. So then we ſay, when the Lord is pleaſed to apply the work of his grace to convert a ſinner, that work is never fruſtrated, but always hath neceſſarily the work of faith, renovation, and converſion following it.

Secondly, We ſhall a little confirm the doctrine; and the grounds of confirmation are theſe. 1. The expreſs ſcriptures wherein this truth is aſſerted, as John vi. 44, 45. It is ſaid in the 44. verſe, *No man can come to me except the Father draw him:* And on the contrary, it is expreſly ſet down, ver. 45. *It is written in the prophets, they ſhall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me:* And this being contradiſtinguiſhed from external preaching, and being that which is called *drawing*, ver. 44. he knits believing to it, and makes believing, called *coming*, a neceſſary effect of it, that to whomſoever God gives that inward leſſon, they ſhall come; which confirms the doctrine, that whomſoever the Lord teaches and ſchools by his grace, and calls effectually, they do neceſſarily believe. Another paſſage we have, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out the work of your ſalvation in fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and*

to

to do of his good pleasure; where the apostle makes the work of grace not only to work ability to will and to do, but to work also to will and to do actually: And grace never worketh *to will*, and leaves the man unwilling, but necessarily supposeth the man's closing willingly with Christ, on whom he works thus. A 2*d*. Ground of confirmation is drawn from these expressions, whereby this work is set forth, and the promises comprehending it in God's covenant, wherein it is called the *giving of a new heart, a heart of flesh, the writing of the law in the heart, the putting of his Spirit within his people, and causing them to walk in his statutes*, &c. Jer. xxxi. 33. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. And it is impossible to conceive aright of the fulfilling of these promises without including the effect: The giving of the new heart is not only a persuading to believe, but the actual giving of the new heart, whereof faith is a special part; which promise is peculiar to the elect, though the offer of it be more large, and be further extended: And what can that promise of God's writing the law in the heart be, but an effectual inclining of the heart to the will of God? or inward renovation contradistinguished from the external ministry, that can only hold out his will in a book, and speak it to the ear. 3. This may be cleared and confirmed from the nature of the work of grace, which is such a mighty work and so powerful, as it is impossible it can be frustrated, or disappointed; unless we say that grace in God, or the grace of God is not so powerful as corruption in us, which were blasphemy: To this purpose the apostle prayeth in behalf of Christians, Eph. i. 19, 20. that they may know *what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead:* He speaketh so in this high strain, to set out both the exceeding stubbornness of our nature that needs such a work, and the exceeding great power of the grace of

of God that worketh irresistibly, not only in the conversion of the elect at first, but in all the after acts of believing; so Eph. iii. 7. the same apostle says, *According to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power;* and Col. i. 29. *According to his working which worketh in me mightily:* The power that worketh in believers is God's omnipotent power, which worketh effectually and mightily; and if this power be exercised in the continuing and promoting of faith, as said before, it must be much more exercised in the begetting of faith: Yea, and what need is there that he should exercise it, if not for this end, that where he exerciseth it, it may also prevail? A *4th* ground of confirmation may be drawn from the Lord's great end which he hath before him in this work; and that is the gaining of glory to his grace, and to have the whole work of conversion attributed to it: And if this be his end, he must and will prevail by his grace in carrying through the work in order to this end; If it were left indifferent to man to yield or not to yield to God as he pleaseth, the whole weight of the work of conversion should not lie upon grace, man's mouth should not be stopped; but when that question should be asked, *Who hath made thee to differ; and what hast thou, O man, but what thou hast received?* He should still have something to boast of, and the work of his conversion, should at best be halved betwixt grace and his own free-will: This would necessarily follow, if grace did not carry through the work, and so God should miss his end. A *5th* ground of confirmation is taken from the consideration of God's decree, of the covenant of redemption betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, and of the power and wisdom of God in carrying on this work, which we put together for brevity sake: from all which, it is clear, that there is, and must be a necessary connection betwixt the work of grace on believers, and the effect; and that it is not in the power

er of man's free-will to reſiſt it, which indeed is not freedom, but bondage. 1. Then, we ſay, that if we conſider the decree of election, we find that where grace is applied, faith and converſion muſt follow; otherwiſe, if the work of grace were not effectual to convert, God's decree ſhould be ſuſpended on the creature's free-will, and be effectual, or not effectual according as it pleaſed; and is that a little matter to make his decree depend upon, and be effectual, or not according to man's pleaſure? That which ſecures his decree, and makes it infallibly to take effect, is, that he hath effectual means to bring about his decree. 2. If we conſider the covenant of redemption, betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, we will find that upon the one ſide the Mediator particularly undertaketh for them that are given to him, that he ſhall looſe none of them; and upon the other ſide, we have (to ſpeak with reverence of the majeſty of God after the manner of men) the Father's obligation to make ſuch perſons in due time believers, that Chriſt the Mediator may ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied, according to that promiſe made to him, Pſal. cx. 3. *In the day of thy power thy people ſhall be willing;* and that other, Iſa. liii. 11. *He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied, by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many*, &c. and accordingly himſelf ſaith, John vi. 37. *All that the Father hath given to me ſhall come unto me;* where it is clear, that theſe who are given muſt neceſſarily come: and he alſo ſaith, John x. 16. *Other ſheep have I, which are not of this fold, them alſo I muſt bring;* and it cannot be ſuppoſed without horror and blaſphemy, that this determinate, ſolid, and ſure tranſaction, having all its means included in it, and being, as to its end, ſo peremptory, ſhall as to theſe laws, and that end, and as to their being carried through, not be in God's hand, but in the hand of man's free-will? if it were there, O! how uncertain and looſe would the bargain, and God's deſign

in begetting faith, and in bringing ſouls through grace to glory be! 3. If we conſider the Lord's power, in beginning and promoting, and his wiſdom in carrying on of this work, his power whereby he raiſeth the dead, and his wiſdom whereby he leads from death to life; is it poſſible to conceive or imagine theſe to be applied by the Lord in the converſion of a ſinner, but this doctrine muſt needs hold, that the work of his grace powerfully applied, hath always faith and converſion following on it, and that the Lord leaveth it not to the option of elect ſouls, to believe, or not to believe as they pleaſe? He muſt not, he cannot be fruſtrated of his end and deſign, but he muſt bring them to a cordial cloſure with Chriſt by faith in order to their ſalvation.

Uſe 1. The firſt Uſe ſerves to fix you in the faith of this great truth, and though we uſe not, neither is it needful to trouble you with long queſtions and debates; yet when the like of this doctrine comes in our way, eſpecially in ſuch a time, when the pure truths of God, and this among the reſt, are oppoſed and called in queſtion, it is requiſite that a word be ſpoke for your confirmation and eſtabliſhment; and we would hence have you fixed in theſe two. 1. Of the impotency of nature in the beginning or promoting any thing of the work of grace which belongs to the firſt branch of the doctrine. 2. Of the effectualneſs and irreſiſtibleneſs of grace; that wherever God begets and brings in a ſoul, he does it by his own powerful grace; and wherever he applies that work, faith and converſion neceſſarily follow, which belongs to the ſecond branch of the doctrine: and we would rather ſpeak a little to this, becauſe it is queſtioned by the enemies of the grace of God, than which there is nothing they ſet themſelves more to dethrone and debaſe, and to exalt and cry up nature and free-will, as if it did ſit on the throne, and grace behoved to come and ſupplicate it; and as if it might accept or reject its

its will at pleaſure, as to the converſion of a ſinner. In oppoſition to which, this doctrine holds good, that wherever the Lord applies his grace, he effectually finiſhes the work of faith and converſion, and there is no ſoul that can utterly reſiſt it; and wherever the Lord applies this grace, the grace that converts one cannot be fruſtrated by another. Theſe things we hold in oppoſition to the direct aſſertion of the enemies of grace, whereby they make the work of converſion, not ultimately to terminate on grace, but on man's free-will; and how dangerous and damnable this error is, may eaſily appear. For, 1. It overturns and runs croſs to the whole ſtrain of the goſpel; for if we looſe but this one pin, in making faith and converſion not to depend on grace, but on free-will, then the whole fabrick of grace falls down flat; then God ſhould elect us, becauſe we were to elect him, contrary to the ſcripture; which tells us, that he elects us, and not we him; and that our cloſing with him by faith, depends on his electing of us: It overturns our free juſtification by grace, for ſuppoſing faith comes in with juſtification, as it doth, none being juſtified but by faith, and that believing is of our ſelves, and that it is in the power of man's free-will to cloſe the bargain; all is not here of grace, our juſtification is not free, but ſomeway depends on free-will: it overturns the perſeverance of the ſaints; for if believing depend on free-will, then our perſeverance depends on it alſo; for if the man's free-will change, he may fall back and break his neck in a manner, at the very threſhold of heaven; whereas if it be the work of grace (as indeed it is) that brings forth faith, and carries it on; and if this work of grace cannot be fruſtrated or reſtrained by the malice and hardneſs of heart, to which it is applied, becauſe it cures the hardneſs, and removes that malice; then certainly this error cannot ſtand: And we are perſwaded when we plead thus for grace, we have the beſt end of the

debate, and the ſureſt ground to go upon, moſt for God's honour, and moſt for the comfort of believers. 2. This error thwarts with the glory of the grace of God; for it is an error that ſtrikes at the richeſt and and moſt radiant diamond of the crown of the glory of Chriſt; it places election and the effectuallneſs of God's decree as to effectual calling, faith, juſtification, and perſeverance on the perſon himſelf, and makes God and Chriſt to be in man's debt, and reverence, to make his decree effectual; whereas it is the glory of grace to have all fleſh in its debt, as having loved freely, elected, called, juſtified, ſanctified, and carried on the work of grace till it end and be perfected in glory freely, which is the ſong of the redeemed, Rev. i. 5. 6. *Unto him who hath loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion:* If eternal love be free, then the expreſſion or manifeſtation of it in making us kings and prieſts unto God, is alſo free. 3. This error is exceeding deſtructive to the conſolation of God's people: Is it not a comfortleſs doctrine that founds their believing and perſeverance on their own free-will? If ye were to make the bargain of grace, whether would ye think it more comfortable and ſure, that the effectualneſs of believing and perſeverance ſhould hang on the grace of God, or on your own free-will? eſpecially conſidering the pravity of your will; doleful would your condition be, if free-will were the baſis or foundation; and God uſed no more but external perſwaſion: How ſpecious ſoever this opinion ſeems to be, becauſe it puts it in man's option to believe, and convert himſelf, or not, as he pleaſeth; yet it overturns the whole ſtrain of the goſpel, and quite eclipſeth the glory of grace, and cuts the very throat of your conſolation, and is the great ground of Popery, Pelagianiſm, and Arminianiſm, to which ye would therefore ſo much the more advert; and

and we do the rather ſpeak to it, that ye may be guarded againſt it, and that ye may be ſettled in the truth, eſpecially ſince the ſame errors are a reviving in another ſhape in theſe days, as is manifeſt in that foolry of Quakers, who talk of a light within them, and talk ſo of that light, as if it were of power ſufficient to convert and guide them, if it be not reſiſted. As alſo that other conceit of being above ordinances, implies ſomething of the ſame error, which ye ſhould ſet yourſelves to abhor, as that which the devil is again labouring to ſow the ſeed of amongſt us, and labour to be confirmed in the truth; for if there be any truth at all in Chriſtianity, theſe are two main truths; the utter inability that is in mens heart by nature to exerciſe faith in Chriſt; and the efficacious and irreſiſtible power of the grace of God, in the begetting of faith where it is begotten; which when we ſhall all appear before the tribunal of God, will be found to be ſo; and none will have a mouth opened to oppoſe them. And what abſurdity, I pray, is there here, notwithſtanding all the clamour of corrupt men? that God hath reſerved this work of converting ſinners by his grace to himſelf, and hath not put it in the hand of their own free-will; which ſuppoſeth men to have a ſtock within themſelves, and hath many fearful effects following it, tending to the depreciating of the grace of God, and to the drawing men off from dependance on Chriſt, and to the giving of them ground of boaſting in themſelves, and of vanity and ſecurity; all which this doctrine of God's grace overthrows, and ſtops the mouth of the creature from all vain boaſting, to the high exaltation of God's free, ſovereign, and efficacious grace, and to the great comfort of his people.

Uſe 2. The ſecond Uſe ſerves to commend the grace of God to the hearers of the goſpel, and eſpcially to believers. There cannot be a greater commendation given to it than this, that it works effectually; and indeed

indeed it could not be called grace, I mean, saving grace, if it should want this effect, even to save such as it is applied to; but this highly commends grace, that if there be mighty corruption in us, there is a strong arm of grace put forth by him for perfecting that which concerns us, notwithstanding this great strength of corruption. And if ye think yourselves not to be believers, and think this doctrine to be hard, that ye cannot believe without this grace, and yet would fain believe; consider that as none can believe, neither can believers stand without grace; so grace can help you to do that which ye cannot do, which is the commendation of grace, and should make it more lovely to you: This gives encouragement to any poor soul, that is, as it were, in the place of the breaking forth of children, and layeth greater ground of confidence that they shall come speed, than if they had it in their own hand; and serves to obviate that grand objection of souls that would fain be at closing with Christ, and cannot come to him, here is a powerful arm reached forth to draw them.

Use 3. The third use serves to humble believers who have any thing of the work of grace, and so to work them up to thankfulness to him that hath communicated any of it to them. Is there any of you that have grace, who hath made you to differ from others? It was not yourselves but free-grace, and therefore ye have reason to acknowledge it with thankfulness, and to say, If this same doctrine had not been true, I would have been a stranger to God all my days, and remained under the dominion of Satan and sin with these that are in nature; and with David, Psal. xvi. 7. to say, *I bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel, my reins also instruct me in the night-seasons.* This counsel was not the common advice that all got from the word preached, but the inward counsel of the Spirit that made his reins instruct him, and made him inwardly to follow the advice that the word gave him out-

outwardly; and it is this inward work of the Spirit that keeps in the life of grace, as well as begets it; as it is, Pſal. lxxiii. 23, 24. *Nevertheleſs I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me by my right-hand, thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me to glory; whom have I in heaven but thee,* &c. *my fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever:* The Pſalmiſt glories in this, that the work of his being carried thro', did not depend on his own fleſh and heart, but on God, who was the ſtrength of his heart, and his portion for ever. If believers would conſider what they were in their natural condition, and how much they are obliged to the grace of God, that with power was applied in their converſion, it would ſtop their mouth as to boaſting; make them admire grace, and ſound forth its praiſe: and they would think graces ſweet way of prevailing, to be no coactive forcing of their will, but the greateſt part of their freedom: and ſo far would it be from being looked on as a violating or wronging of their will, that it would be eſtemed their trueſt and greateſt liberty: We are perſuaded that the ſaints in heaven count it no bondage that God hath ſo fully freed them from all corruption, that they ſerve him with delight, and do ſo neceſſarily; and ſhall any ſojourning ſaints here below, count it wronging of their will, that God takes ſuch pains on them, to ſubdue corruption, and to bring them to ſome meaſure of conformity to them who are above? God forbid.

Uſe 4. The fourth uſe of it is, To let us ſee, what great ground of encouragement there is here for the hearers of the goſpel, to ſet about the work of believing, and what ground there is to make them all utterly inexcuſable, who ſhall continue in their unbelief; which may be thought ſomewhat ſtrange, when we ſay that no means can be effectual for working of faith, without the effectual grace of God be applied. But

let

let theſe two be put together, 1. That though we be inſufficient of ourſelves, and though all outward means be of themſelves ineffectual, that yet there is a a ſufficiency in the grace of God. And 2. That this grace ſhall be powerful to work faith in the hearers of the goſpel, if they make not themſelves guilty of fruſtrating this grace in the offer of it (as they may do.) Theſe then who will not believe, will be found moſt inexcuſable. But to return to the main intent of this uſe, we ſay, that the encouragement lies here, that though we be unable, we have an able Mediator, and grace is powerful; and therefore we ſhould with the greater encouragement ſet about the work of believing, as the apoſtle reaſons, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to do will and to do of his good pleaſure:* Ye might poſſibly think it had been more encouraging to have ſaid, ye are able of yourſelves to will and to do; but certainly grace is a more encouraging motive than any thing in the creature; ſay not then, ye cannot, will not do, for that excuſe is taken away by God's offering to work both in you by his grace; but let me exhort all, both theſe that are begun to be believers, and thoſe that are to begin to be believers, to be ſo far from diſputing themſelves from it, as that they rather encourage themſelves to work out the work of their own ſalvation with fear and trembling; becauſe God's grace which ye have in your offer, is ſo powerful to work the work, and will admit of no utter oppoſition from corruption in you, if ye receive not the grace of God in vain that is offered to you in the goſpel. If grace were ſo weak as we might caſt it back at our pleaſure, and if it were but a helper in the work of faith and converſion, as Arminians make it, what encouragement could we have from it? And as to practice, is not this doctrine as encouraging? What advantage or comfort is it to undertake any thing in our own ſtrength, which is none

none at all? Is not this much more encouraging, to undertake in the ſtrength of God's grace; knowing that the ſame work of grace that begets faith, is as effectual to carry it on, and to make us perſevere in it, and to enable us to every good word and work; let grace work then, and take a proof of it, and ye ſhall find it powerful. The Lord himſelf give you wiſdom ſo to do for your ſalvation and conſolation.

SERMON XVI.

ISAIAH LIII. 1.

——*And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

IT is difficult to walk evenly and ſtedfaſtly under the pure doctrine of grace, and neither thence to take occaſion to give way to looſeneſs and carnal liberty, nor to become faint and diſcouraged, and fearful at the way of God; corrupt nature is ready to abuſe the beſt things. That word which we have, 1 Pet. iii. 16. that there are many *that wreſt and pervert the ſcripture to their own deſtruction*, holds true, not only of doctrinal hereſies, but it holds alſo true in reſpect of men's practice, or practical errors; for ſome hearing of the impotency of nature, and of the power and perfection of grace in bringing about its deſigned effect, are ready to think that they need to do nothing, alledging that if grace undertake the work it will be wrought, and if not, it will not be wrought; and thus atheiſm and profanity ſteal in ſecretly upon the heart, and the ſweet doctrine of grace is abuſed, and perverted by ſuch to their own deſtruction: There are

others again, who, it may be, will not dare so to contend with God, who yet have their own fainting and discouragement when they hear of this doctrine, and think it hard that they themselves can do nothing, and fear that they will never get to believe, because they cannot do it of themselves; these also fail, and make not the right use of grace.

Ye remember the question which we proposed to speak a little on the last doctrine, to wit, That seeing both these branches of it are true, that except grace concur, the most powerful preaching of the gospel will not beget faith; and that wherever the work of grace goes along with the gospel, there faith is begotten; what is called for from the hearers of the gospel as the use of this doctrine?

Before we come to answer this question more particularly, we would *1st*, premise this word in general, that none should account the preaching or hearing of the word to be useless or fruitless, albeit that without the work of grace, men cannot yield the fruit which it calleth for from them; for our blessed Lord Jesus, Isaiah and Paul preached this doctrine of grace, and the necessity of the Lord's arm to be revealed in the conversion of souls; and yet they taught the word in season and out of season, and were gathering in some, and to some this doctrine was made the savour of life unto life; though to others (through their enmity and corruption) it became the savour of death unto death. To conclude therefore, the inconsistency, or to deny the consistency of these two, to wit, Of the necessity of preaching the doctrine of grace, and of the pressing in sermons the practice of holy duties, and the use of ordinary appointed means, would reach this dreadful length, even to condemn the prophets of old, yea, and our blessed Lord Jesus himself, who says, John vi. 44. after he had preached long, *No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him;* and verse 65.—*Therefore I said unto you, that no man can*

can come to me, unleſs it be given him of my Father. And will any think that his hearers, who accounted this with ſome others, *hard ſayings, and from that time went back, and walked no more with him*, were excuſable in their doing ſo? Or that his preaching was uſeleſs, needleſs, or impertinent, as having a tendency to tempt men to abandon all uſe of means, becauſe he preached this doctrine of the impoſſibility of believing in him, without being drawn by his Father's arm?

But *ſecondly*, We ſhall a little more particularly, in anſwer to the queſtion, ſpeak, *Firſt*, To what uſes people ſhould not make of this doctrine, or what things they ſhould abſtain from, as tending to a wrong uſe of it. *Secondly*, To ſome conſiderations for preſſing this doctrine, and removing from it the conſtruction of hardneſs that we are ready to put upon it. *Thirdly*, To what is the native uſe it calls for; and, *Laſtly*, To ſome conſiderations to preſs this.

For the *firſt*, When we ſay to all that hear this goſpel, that there is a neceſſity of a powerful work of grace e'er this word can be profitable, ye ſhould, 1*ſt*. Abſtain from, and lay aſide curioſity, in ſeeking ſatisfying anſwers to all thoſe objections that are moved againſt it, and abſurdities that it is loaded with by the devil, and man's proud nature, and learn to ſtoop to, and reverence the ſovereign dominion of God, and his deep and unſearchable wiſdom and knowledge, in this ſovereign way of his grace, as the apoſtle doth, Rom. xi. 33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God, how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out?* ye ſhould alſo conſider that other word, Rom. ix. 20. *Who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* or expoſtulateſt with him? *Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus?* It is good to enquire and ſeek to know the uſe the Lord calls for of this doctrine with ſobriety; but there is an enquiring to ſatisfy curioſity, which the Lord abhorreth, as we may gather from,

Exod. xix. 21. where the Lord being to deliver his will, ſaith to Moſes, *Go down, charge the people*, (a word of peremptory command) *leaſt they break thro' unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them periſh.* The Lord is not diſpleaſed that his people ſhould endeavour to behold, and take him up aright; but when their end is not good, but to ſatisfy an itch of curioſity, it diſpleaſes him. This may be uſeful in many caſes, and particularly in this we have in hand, to teach us ſobriety in ſeeking to know the way of God's grace, as the Lord would have his people, Exod. xix. waiting for as much of his mind as he thought fit to acquaint them with, and to write on the two tables of ſtone, but he would not have them break in over the boundary or march which he did ſet to them, leſt he ſhould break through on them, and they ſhould be made to periſh. So would he have men in their ſtudying the knowledge of his ways, and particularly of the way of his grace, to keep his meaſures, and to contain themſelves within the limits that he pleaſeth to ſet them. 2. Abſtain from carnal fretting at and expoſtulating with the way of God, whether in the higheſt degree, of upbraiding grace and ſnarling at it, that ye ſhould not have the ſtock in your own hand; or in an inferior degree, having a heart inwardly diſcontent, that ye are not more able of yourſelves than ye are to believe, which is the thing that the apoſtle oppoſeth, Rom. ix. 20, 21. *Should the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay*, &c. eſpecially ſince none can anſwer that queſtion with any juſt reflection upon God; who is to be blamed for that defect or inability? Or whence did that inability or defect in man's nature proceed? God was gracious, free, and liberal, in making man perfect; and whoſe fault is it that it is otherwiſe? 3. Abſtain from, and beware of drawing deſperate concluſions as to the giving over the uſe of the means, or of becoming more lazy

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and ſecure in the duties of holineſs, and in the practice of piety, becauſe of the neceſſity of this grace; but on the contrary, be the more diligent and ſerious, that ye have ſo much need of grace, and that of yourſelves ye can do ſo little, or rather nothing that is truly good without it.

I know that profane hearts are very fertile of arguments to plead this point of neglect of means, and will readily ſay, what is the fruit of diligence, and the prejudice of lazineſs? the one will do us no good, and the other can do us no ill, ſeeing it is grace that doth all the work. But, 1. By your lazineſs ye mar your own fruitfulneſs, and that through your own fault, and make this addition to your guilt, that ye not only continue graceleſs, but do ſo thro' your ſin wilfully. 2. Ye may draw on to your natural impotency, habitual and judicial hardneſs of heart, and blindneſs of mind; it is on this very ground that many ears are made heavy, many eyes made blind, and many hearts made fat; and is that a little or light matter? 3. Tho' ye may think this little, yet that which will bear the weight of your ſentence at the day of judgment, will not be your natural impotency, or that grace was not made efficacious to your converſion, but this will be it, that when God ſent out his word to win you, and offered his grace for enabling you to yield, ye did maliciouſly and deliberately reject it. So that it will never be ſuffered to come to this, I was unable; becauſe the word was wilfully rejected before it came to this.

But *Secondly*, Becauſe there are ſome others poſſibly that have more ſerioufneſs in the uſe of means, who, tho' they dare not quarrel with grace, yet it grieves and diſcourages them becauſe they can do ſo little, and they are made heartleſs to eſſay, and hopeleſs to come ſpeed; and it may be, that this is in ſome whom the Lord allows not to draw any ſuch concluſion, but would rather have encouraged; we would

would say to such, that they would beware of fainting, or being discouraged; as if that were impossible to God and his grace which is impossible to them; they would by all means beware of sitting down, and slackening their hand in duty, because they can do so little. We know there are some that need not much to be spoken to for satisfying them in this point, but there are others who are affected with this doctrine, to whom the Lord allows more tender usage, and would not have them to faint, nor be discouraged; you that are such (if any be) may know that there is ground for us to press this, and that we may remove the construction of hardness from the sovereign way of God's grace, wherein he hath thought fit to draw men unto an absolute dependance on himself. In the dispensing of it, we shall propose these few considerations. 1. That (which was hinted at before) never a man that hath heard this gospel when he comes to count with God, shall have it to say, that the reason why he did not receive and embrace it, was his impotency and inability, but the real reason shall be found to be his willful rejecting of it; and upon the contrary it shall be found, that there was never one that would in earnest have had strength to run the way of God's commandments, and faith to grip to and embrace Jesus Christ offered in this gospel, that for want of ability came short; and if so, what reason is there to complain? if none want faith, but such as would not have him, and if none that would have him complain of their want of him, upon these two we have great ground of encouragement to them that have a sincere affection to him, and there is no ground for people to sit up or fall lazy in pursuing after union and communion with him in the use of means: None shall have cause to complain of their want of him, but such as with their own consent gave him over; and any that would fain have had him, shall not miss him; for this real willingness to close with Christ, being

being a work of the grace of God, and it being no leſs power that works this will, than the power which doth effectuate the work of converſion, and bring it to perfection; he that begins the work will perfect it; and therefore in this caſe, men had more need to reflect upon their unwillingneſs to have Chriſt, and to cloſe with him on his own terms, than to diſpute their impotency and inability. 2. Conſider what they have been whom the Lord hath brought through, were they not ſuch as had as much need of grace as ye have? Had they not the ſame corrupt nature that ye have? Were they not as impotent and unable to do for themſelves? Could any of themſelves do more than ye can? Conſider all them that are before the throne, was it not this ſame grace of God, and not their good nature, nor their free-will that did the work? And they were not expreſly, nor by name included in the promiſes more than ye are; and ye are not expreſly excluded more than they were; the Lord brought forward the work of grace in them that ſame way that he dealeth with you; by the preaching of his word, he brought them firſt to know their ſinfulneſs, impotency and weakneſs; to know that there was need of a Saviour, that their ſalvation was not of themſelves; neither was it in them to make right uſe of the Saviour, and ſalvation offered, but in the power of his grace; and what if he be doing ſo to thee? and if that condition be hard and hopeleſs now, it had been a hopeleſs and hard condition to thoſe many that are now before the throne. 3. Conſider, that there is no queſtion but grace is effectual to carry on the work, and to make it go through: all the difficulty and diſſatisfaction is, becauſe God keeps the application in his own hand, which the man's heart would have in its hand; and which of them, do you think, is moſt ſure and encouraging? all your fainting and diſcouragement reſolveth in this, becauſe ye can do ſo little; if ye be in good earneſt deſirous to have

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grace through the work of faith and converſion, would ye poſſibly make choice of another, or better hand than God's to put it in? Is it not as ſuitable and ſure, that his wiſdom ſhould contrive and lay down the way, as it is to his power to ſet it forward, and to the freedom of his grace to make application of it, and all more ſuitable and ſure than if it were in your own hand? May ye not think ſhame to be diſcouraged on this ground, becauſe any thing ye do ye muſt needs get it from God; and that ſhould be an obſtruction in the way of godlineſs, which is a main encouragement to it? Is the Lord an upbraider? Is there any that can quarrel with him as niggardly in diſpenſing of his grace? *Doth he not give to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man?* And doth it not become him well to have the conduct and guiding of his own grace? 4. Conſider how many the Lord hath given grace to already; and how he hath given it freely, ſurprizingly, and unexpectedly; if ye could bring forth any proof that never one got good of God, ye might have a pretext for your diſcouragment; but when as many as are before the throne are proofs of his being gracious to ſinners, when ſo many have gotten good of God before you, and when there are ſeveral, who to your own certain knowledge, are daily getting good of him ſenſibly, freely, and unexpectedly, who were as undiſpoſed to believe as ye are, and as faint and diſcouraged as ye are; and when he ſays that, *He is found of them that ſought him not;* is it not as likely that a poor creature that is longing for his grace ſhall be ſatisfied as well now as ever? according to that word, Matt. v. 6. *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled;* the ſoul that fain would have holineſs ſhall get it. I know there will be a queſtion made here, and a new objection ſtarted, whether this longing or hunger be real or not? but if your longing and hunger be not real, it will not trouble you much to want; it is not to encourage

courage or comfort such, that have no real longing, that all this is spoken; we know there is more need to make some vomit up the conceit of their ability, than to encourage them against any seen and felt inability. There are many, alas! that think little of the grace of God, with whom the error about universal grace would agree well, they having a presumptuous conceit of faith, and that it is not so difficult a thing to believe as is alledged; we must profess that we have not much to say to such for their encouragement, only we would let them know, that there is a time coming when God will refute and silence them: but as for such as see their inability, and are put to any measure of suitable seriousness and longing in earnest after believing, the Lord allows that they be strengthened and encouraged; and to such we would say this, if their missing of Jesus Christ grieve them, if it be their burden, that they cannot believe, and if their longing, hunger, and thirst, be some pain and piece of exercise to them, so as other things relish not with them, they are so taken up with that; and if they had their souls choice, it would be this, even a satisfying sight of union and communion with him; their longing and hunger is real, and we may turn over that just now cited word to them, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled;* this hunger and thirst was never begotten without some spiritual physic from Christ the physician, who hath made provision for satisfying it; and as we used to say of the natural life; he that gives an appetite provides food: so we may say of this hunger; he that gives this spiritual appetite, gives always the food with it; would to God there were many enlarged appetites to receive, our Lord would, no doubt, be found ready to satisfy them all. If the mouth were wide opened, the affections enlarged, and the soul sick under hunger and thirst for Christ and holiness, that sickness should not be found to be unto death,

but to the glory of the grace of him who is the great healer.

For the *third* thing that we propoſed, to wit, That ſeeing there are many ways how men may go wrong, and yet none ſhould give over hope, what is the native uſe and exerciſe that this doctrine calls for? I ſhall ſpeak to this, firſt in general, and ſecondly, in ſome few ſteps or particular directions. 1. Then in general, ye ſhould conſider that place, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out the work of your own ſalvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure;* where it is clear, that the exhortation given to them, to work out their ſalvation, is drawn from this ſame doctrine of the efficacious work of God's grace working in them to will and to do as the great motive; God, ſaith he, worketh in you to will and to do, therefore work ye out the work of your own ſalvation. There are in this general exhortation four things implyed; the firſt is the very entry or beginning of the work of ſalvation, that is, the exerciſing of faith in Jeſus Chriſt; it is of God, therefore work out that work; as if he had ſaid, believe to the ſaving of your ſouls, as the word is, Heb. x. ult. *For it is God that works the will in you.* The ſecond is the work of repentance, that is alſo taken in here, for his bidding them *work in fear and trembling*, reſpects their ſinfulneſs, and neceſſarily implieth repentance. The third is their aiming at perfection in holineſs, the putting forth themſelves in improving of all means, and in the exerciſing of all duties for that end; *work out*, ſays he. And fourthly, it looks to the manner, that it be not carnally, or in carnal confidence, but *with fear and trembling;* and if it ſhould be aſked, how doth that concluſion flow from this doctrine, it is God's work, or he works in you to will and to do, therefore work ye out your ſalvation? men would rather think the concluſion ſhould be, ſince God doth all this, do ye nothing: No,

No, but the juſt contrary concluſion is drawn, and it hangs on theſe two. 1. On the efficacy of grace, it is God that works to will and to do, it is his grace that ſtrengtheneth you; and where he works the will, he works the deed; where he begins a work, he will alſo finiſh and effectuate it, therefore take ye encouragement to work; as if he had ſaid, fight well, for ye have a brave ſecond, though it be not proper to call grace a ſecond: Set yourſelves to the exerciſe of holineſs in earneſt, and God will make it go on with you. 2. On the conſideration of ſinfulneſs and weakneſs in them, which ſhould make them work in fear and trembling; as if he had ſaid, ſeeing it is God, and the efficacy of his grace that doth the work, be not ye vain and preſumptuous: the firſt part ſays, it is God that works, and not you, therefore be ye the more holily confident: the ſecond part ſays, it is not you, but God, and therefore do the work with fear and trembling; and both tend to this, that men ſhould be ſerious in minding and proſecuting the work of their ſalvation, from the firſt ſtep to the laſt, in fear and trembling, on this ground; that though they have nothing in themſelves, yet there is enough in God and his grace to do their work. How is it then, or what can be the reaſon, that we in our hearts do draw the juſt contrary concluſion to that which the Spirit of God draws here from this ground; when we have the offer of grace, and hear of the power and efficacy of it, it ſhould as to our part provoke us to be more buſy, reaſoning thus with ourſelves, that though our corruption will ſoon overcome us, yet it will not, it cannot overcome grace; and though the exerciſe of faith be above our reach, yet it is not above the reach of grace; though we be weak, yet grace is ſtrong, and therefore we will work it out. And on the other ſide, we ought to continue humble, and in fear and trembling work it out, becauſe it is not we, but grace, that doth the work. If grace were well conſidered,

there is nothing that would more ſtrengthen mens hands to work; and on the other hand, there is nothing that would make people more watchful, and to walk in holy fear, conſidering that we are poor beggars, and through our unwatchfulneſs, or conceit, and preſumption, may mar the diſpenſations of his grace, eſpecially if we grow ſecure, and ungratefully forget what we receive from him.

2. I come now to ſome ſteps or particular directions implied in this uſe, becauſe it will be aſked, what then ſhould people do? And before I touch on particulars, take theſe two caveats in the entry. 1. That we can propoſe nothing to be done by you, neineither can ye do any thing of yourſelves that is a gracious act or deed. 2. That we underſtand not that any thing can be done by men in their natural ſtate, that doth infer or procure, and far leſs deſerve the giving of grace to any; but ſeeing God hath given direction to us how to walk in order to the working out of our ſalvation, we ſay, 1. That it's ſafe to us to walk in the way he hath directed us to walk in, and in the uſe of the means he hath preſcribed, and much more ſafe than to lay them aſide. 2. That there is a greater ſuitableneſs betwixt the uſe of the means, and the finding of grace, than there is betwixt the neglect of means and the finding of it. 3. That it agrees well with God's way in bringing about the converſion of ſinners, to bring them piece and piece forward; ſometimes bringing them to the uſe of external means, and to the performance of outward duties; ſometimes convincing them of ſin, and letting them ſee their need of Chriſt; ſometimes diſcovering the worth that is in Chriſt; and bringing them to fall in love with him e'er they actually cloſe with him; and making them in their practice to follow any appearance or glimmering of light that is let out to them, and to go ſuch lengths as that light diſcovereth to be the way, and make it plain as to their duty.

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Now for particular directions, we would, 1. Bid you ſtudy to be fixed and eſtabliſhed in the faith of theſe general truths that relate to man's ſinfulneſs and miſery, and inſufficiency in himſelf, *That in us, that is, in our fleſh dwelleth no good thing;* that naturally we are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and cannot quicken ourſelves; and in the faith of the neceſſity and powerfulneſs of grace, and that its Chriſt that muſt give and work faith, and that grace can do the buſineſs, and prevail where it is put on work; ye ſhould alſo conſider, and believe the great hazard of miſſing grace, and the advantage that cometh by it; ye ſhould meditate on theſe theſe things, on the ſcriptures that hold them forth, and on the experiences of the ſaints that confirm them, that ye may not only have a glance and tranſient view of them, but may be confirmed in the faith and truth of them. 2. Content not yourſelves with a general faith of the truth of this doctrine, but labour to be ſuitably affected with theſe things that ye believe; and tho' every affectedneſs be not ſpecial grace, yet I ſpeak to them that are ready to lay the blame and fault on the grace of God, and yet were never affected with their own graceleſſneſs: ye ſhould ſtudy to be affected with the graceleſſneſs of your nature, and let it put you to ſome ſanctified diſquiet and trouble, till with Ephraim ye be made to *ſmite upon your thigh*, and till ye be put to a holy deliberation and conſultation about your own condition; a man that is under the hazard of a civil penalty, will think on it again and again, it will affect him, and he will not be at reſt till he be without the reach of it; much more ſhould ye be affected with the hazard that your ſouls are in through ſin: ye are not excuſable, ſo long as ye come not this length. 3. Add to this diligence in the uſe of all outward means and duties, whereby, and wherein the Lord uſeth to communicate his grace, *abounding always in the work of the Lord*, as the apoſtle exhorteth, 1 Cor. xv. 58. Be diligent

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in ſecret prayer, reading, meditation, conference, ſelf-examination, hearing, keeping good company, and the like, which indeed hypocrites may do, yet they ceaſe not for that to be duties. 4. Be ſincere and ſerious in the uſe and performance of theſe means and duties; that which I mean, is a moral ſincerity and ſerioufneſs, ſuch as a man will readily have in a civil cauſe that he hath depending before a civil judge, or in hearing of news, or the like, which is a thing that may be, and is often found in men that are void of a principle of grace; and yet people are very often defective in this, and make themſelves exceeding guilty before God, becauſe they come not this length. 5. Take heed and beware of entertaining any thing that holds and bars out grace, or of doing any thing that may mar or quench the working or moving of grace; if ye cannot get Chriſt entertained in your heart as ye ſhould, be ſure to give it to no other; if ye cannot get corruption thruſt out, nor mortified, watch againſt the riſing or harbouring of that which ye know to be corruption, and againſt the entrance or riſing of ſuch evils, as ye know will keep or put away the beloved; guard alſo againſt the neglecting of ſuch means, as by the neglect whereof ye may grieve his Spirit. 6. Study and ſeek after a compoſed frame of ſpirit in your ordinary walk, and eſpecially in duties of worſhip: Carnal mirth and jollity, looſe company, and ſuffering the heart to go a whoring after the things of the world, do not only provoke Chriſt as they are ſins, but indiſpoſe us for duty, and mar the exerciſe of grace where it is, and keep it back where it is not; therefore the wiſe man ſaith Eccl. vii. 3. *That ſorrow is better than laughter; for by the ſadneſs of the countenance the heart is made better.* Carnal ſorrow is not to be commended, but ſober ſadneſs, or a grave and compoſed frame of ſpirit is better than a light and unſettled frame, it being very hard, if not impoſſible to keep the heart right even where

where there is grace, but where there is some counterpoise; and it must be far more impossible to keep it right where the work of grace is not, or but in the very first beginnings of it; and tho' I do not call this composedness of frame, *Grace*, yet it keeps men in some capacity, yet as it were, to receive grace. It is said, Lam. iii. 27, 28. *That it's good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth, he sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath born it upon him, he puts his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope:* For tho' crosses are not always blessed to conversion, yet we may see now and then that sad times are the beginnings of better times; even in hypocrites, their sad times ordinarily are their best times. I neither desire nor allow any to bring crosses upon themselves, yet I would desire all to make the best use of any cros's they are under, and to be acquainting themselves with their sin and infirmities, and with their hazard, and such other things as may effect and compose them without nourishing discouragement and anxiety; and to love as well to speak and hear such things spoken of, as may provoke to sighing and sadness, as those that may provoke to laughter: *I said of laughter*, (saith Solomon, Eccl. ii. 2.) *it is mad, and of mirth, what doth it?* and Prov. xiv. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness:* Though oft-times our laughter may be so sinful, yet it readily more indispoſeth us for any spiritual duty than sorrow doth; the heart is like a clock, whereof when the inner wheels are set a reeling, it is not soon put right and settled. 7. I would propose Ephraim's example to you, Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. And desire that ye would in the sight and sense ye have of your sinfulness, weakness, and sillyness, bemoan yourselves and your sad condition to God, put up that prayer to him, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned:* These words flowing from suitable sense are good; and then follows, *after that I was turned, I repented:* It is observable, that in the

the very entry he is graciouſly taken notice of by the Lord, *ſurely I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf thus:* So it is with God's people, when they conſider how great ſtrangers they have been to God, how ſinful and ſtubborn, and how impoſſible it is for them to mend themſelves of themſelves, they retire themſelves into ſome corner, and there bemoan their caſe, and cry out, O! what a ſinful nature is this, and when will it be amended! *I am as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*, ſays Ephraim, and the Lord tells, he heard and obſerved it; when poſſibly he thought he was ſcarcely, if at all praying, but rather ſighing out as it were a ſhort ejaculation to God, O! that I were amended! the laſt word of his prayer is, *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned*, or convert thou me, and I ſhall be converted: He ſees that when all is done, he muſt cleanſe his hands and leave the matter to God; I cannot, but thou canſt work the work, and it ends ſweetly in words of faith, *for thou art the Lord my God;* and where words of faith are after ſerious exerciſe, that exerciſe hath often times faith going along with it; hence are thoſe words, Lam. iii. 20. *If ſo be there may be hope:* Pſal. cxix. *Incline mine heart, open mine eyes*, &c. and Luke ix. 13. *How much more will your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that aſk him?* It is good to pray for the efficacy of grace, and to offer ourſelves ſubjects to be wrought upon, and objects to receive what grace offers to us.

As we began theſe directions with a word of caution, ſo we would cloſe them: Do not think that theſe things in a natural man, following his ſinful courſe, will bring forth grace; neither conclude, that where theſe things only are diſcerned and no more in ſome perſons, that there grace is wanting, it being to help ſuch forward that we mainly ſpeak to them: only in ſome, 1. Keep clean and clear the light ye have. 2. Improve the ſtrength beſtowed. And 3. What ye have not, put it over on God, and ſeek from him, who

who hath grace to give for working that in you; and it would ſeem that in reaſon ye ſhould refuſe none of theſe three. 1. We ſay, keep clean and clear your light, for if ye detain the truth of God in unrighteouſneſs, and make as it were a priſoner of it, by ſetting a guard of corrupt affections about it, ye may bring on blindneſs. 2. Improve what ſtrength ye have, for if ye improve not your ſtrength, were it but in natural parts and endowments, that makes you inexcuſable, when ſpiritual and gracious qualifications are denied to you, for ye have procured this to yourſelves. Are there not many things that ye thought yourſelves able for, that ye never ſeriouſly once eſſayed? Much more might have been done as to repentance, love to God, charity to others, and the like: And when ye have not ſtretched yourſelves to the utmoſt in theſe, there are ſure many things left undone that ye might have done. 3. What ye cannot do, or find yourſelves unable to do, put it on God to do for you, ſeriouſly, humbly, ſingly, and ſelf-deniedly; for if ye come not to God with that which ye are unequal and unable for, ye are ſtill ſhort of your duty, and without excuſe. Take theſe then together, improve any ſtrength ye have according to any meaſure of light God hath given you; and coming to God thro' Jeſus Chriſt, ſeek what ye want from him, and leave the acceptation of your perſons and of your performances on him. This is the reſult of all that we have ſpoke of this doctrine of grace, that ye may not take occaſion from the way of God's diſpenſing grace, to continue graceleſs, which if ye do, it will be ground of a moſt grievous challenge againſt you; but that you may ſee an excellent conſiſtency betwixt the ſovereignty of grace, and your going about the means appointed of God in order to faith and converſion, and the ſtudy of holineſs; that ye may go on in the uſe of theſe means, with an eye to grace, in the ſenſe of your own inſufficiency to think as of your

ſelves, ſo much as a good thought, leaving all your duties at Chriſt's feet, walking before him with ſtopped mouths; when any thing is wanting, ſtanding at his door and begging it from him; and when any thing is received, aſcribing nothing of it to yourſelves, but giving him all the thanks, praiſe, and glory of it. To him be praiſe for ever.

SERMON XVII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 2, 3.

Verſe 2. *For he ſhall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comelineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him.*

Verſe 3. *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men; a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him: he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.*

IN the former Verſe the prophet hath aſſerted the rarity and ſcarcity of believing the goſpel, and receiving of Jeſus Chriſt offered therein, *who hath believed our report?* ſaith he, who hath made Chriſt? *And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* To whom hath this goſpel been made effectual by the power of God for the engaging of their hearts to him?

In theſe two Verſes he gives a reaſon as it were of this, which runs upon theſe two. 1. The low appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in reſpect of his outward condition, it hath no outward beauty, ſplendor nor greatneſs to commend it, but is attended with

with much meanness, and with many afflictions. 2. The itching humour of men who are taken up with worldly grandeur, or greatness and glory, and make little account of any thing that wants that; as if he said, it is no wonder that Christ get few to believe on him, and that few receive this gospel, for he will not come with much worldly pomp and grandeur, which the men of the world greatly affect and are much taken up with.

To open the words a little, we shall first consider the matter of this reason and then the consequence of it; or what influence it hath on mens offending at Christ, and continuing in their unbelief: only we shall permit two or three words to both.

That which we premit first is this, That the *he* that is here spoken of, is our Lord Jesus Christ who in the New Testament hath this text applied to him, for albeit there be no *he* so expressly mentioned in this chapter before, yet in the 13 Verse of the former chapter, to which this relates the *he* that is spoken of here, is called *the Lord's servant*; and it is said of him that *he shall be exalted, and made very high*; and it is not unusual to speak of Christ singularly by a relative without an antecedent, as Cant. i. 2. *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth*; because Christ to believers is so singular an one, that whenever he is spoken of by way of eminency and excellency, as here, they cannot mistake him, or take another for him. *Secondly*, this want of *form and comeliness* is not to be understood of any personal defect in our Lord's human nature, but in respect of, and with reference to the tract of his life, and what accompanied his humiliation, to wit, that it was low and mean, without that external grandeur, pomp and splendor of outward things, which the world esteem to be comliness and beauty. 3. Where it is said, *He shall grow up before him*, &c. It relates to the hearers of the report of the gospel concerning him, or to the man that

believes not the report ſpoken of before; and ſo relates to the words of the firſt verſe, *who hath believed our report?* which is certainly meant of the man that hears of him, and to whom he ſeems nothing worth, becauſe of his mean and low outward condition; for if we ſhould apply it to God, we cannot ſee how it will ſo well infer the ſcope, and be the reaſon of the unbelief aſſerted formerly, for which end it is brought in here.

We come now to open the words a little, and here we would know that Chriſt's low condition is two ways ſet down in theſe two verſes. 1. In the 2d ver. In reſpect of his want of the abundance of the things of this world. 2. In the 3d ver. In reſpect of the acceſſion of outward croſſes and afflictions; for not only doth he want credit, reſpect and eſteem, but he hath contempt, deſpight and reproach; Not only wants he great riches, but he hath poverty, and is in a poor and low condition. The firſt verſe expreſſeth him negatively, to be no worldly great man; The ſecond verſe expreſſeth him poſitively, to be a mean and deſpiſed man, 1. Then theſe words. *He ſhall grow up as a plant out of a dry ground*, are expounded by the words following, *He hath no form nor comelineſs*; For as ſhrubs or ſcrogs growing up out of dry ground ſhrink and wither, when trees are planted in a fat ſoil are freſh, fair and beautiful: So ſhall it be with Chriſt when he comes forth (ſaith the prophet) to the eyes of the world; he ſhall, as it were, be like a ſhrub in the edge of a heath. Our Lord had perſonal and much divine comelineſs in him, as we may ſee, John i. 4. Where he ſaith that *the word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*; but the comelineſs here ſpoken of, is that outward ſtate, pomp, and ſplendor which great men in the world uſe to have, which Chriſt wanted: This is confirmed by the following words, *And when we ſhall ſee him there*

there is no beauty that we should desire him. There is in men naturally a delight and complacency in that which is beautiful to the natural eye: but, saith he, there shall be no such thing seen in Jesus Christ when he cometh; and therefore no great wonder that few believe on him. And that he saith *we*, it is either according to the phrase used in scripture, to make some very hard thing digest and go down the better with the hearers, whereof the speaker is not guilty; or it is his expressing what is the humour generally in all men naturally; as if he had said, had even we who are elect and godly, no more but carnal eyes we would think no more of Christ than others; for we should get no satisfaction to carnal reason.

The second thing whereby his low condition is set out, is in these words, *He is despised and rejected of men*, &c. Not only shall he want that which carnal hearts and eyes seek and look after, but he shall be so very low, that men shall set him at nought, mock and reject him: and what wonder then that he be not believed on? *A man of sorrows;* as for the course of his life, it shall be spent in sorrows; *and acquainted with grief;* he shall not be a man that shall be a stranger to crosses, griefs, and heaviness, but he shall be familiarly acquainted with them, and they with him; *and we hid as it were our faces from him;* a consequent of the former. As men will not give their countenance to them whom they despise; so, saith he, we shall think shame to see or look at him; he shall be the object of men's contempt and scorn, and we shall not so much as countenance him; he shall be despised and set at nought by Herod and the Roman soldiers: *and we esteemed him not:* That is, we the people of the Jews, who owe him more respect, esteemed him not. And hence he concludes, that it is no wonder that but few believe on him. And so in the words following he goes on to describe his humiliation, and to remove the offence that might be taken at it; *Surely he*

he hath borne our griefs, &c. as if he had said, There is no such cause to shun and stumble at Christ for his lowness and base outward condition; for it was not for himself but for us that he became so low, and therefore it did not become us to think so little of him; his griefs and sorrows are human infirmities that he subjected himself to for our sake; for the wrath of God which he suffered for us is spoken of afterwards. And because there is great difference betwixt Christ's bearing of infirmities, and our bearing of infirmities, he being like to us in all things, except sin; I shall for clearing of this, name three distinctions given by *divines* when they discourse of this subject.

1. They distinguish and put a difference betwixt the *taking on* of infirmities, and the *contracting of* infirmities. The taking on of infirmities, is the assuming of the effect without the cause, the infirmity without the sinful defect; contracting of infirmity is the drawing on of the defect, with, and by the cause. Now, we draw on the cause with the effect; Christ took on the effect, but he had no sinful defect in him to draw on such infirmities; he might have taken on the nature of man without the infirmities, if he had so pleased, but he took on the nature and infirmities without the cause. 2. They distinguish betwixt those infirmities which are simply natural, such as man might have had though he had never sinned, and those infirmities which flow from man's nature, as fallen and corrupted. The first sort may be called *passive*, and relate to suffering, as to be hungry, thirsty, weary, sensible of that which hurts the body: The second sort may be called *active*, and are sinful, as flowing from sin, and tending to sin, as inclination to ill, and indisposition to good, dulness as to the knowing of God's mind, &c. Our Lord took on the first sort of infirmities that are simply natural, and may be without sin; but he was free of the other that imply corruption in the nature: *He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet*

yet without sin, saith the apostle, Heb. iv. 15. 3. They distinguish infirmities into those that are called *natural* and *common* to all men as men, and those that are *personal* and *acquired*, as flowing from some defect in generation, or are drawn on by some intemperance, grossness in the life and conversation. As some families are subject to diseases that come by generation; others draw on diseases by whoredom, drunkenness, and the like. Now our Lord was free of these last; because, being conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin, there was no defect in his generation; and being blameless in his life and conversation, he could acquire none of those infirmities; and therefore the infirmities which he bare are of the first sort, that is, such as are common to all men, and to men as men. And hence we think it probable which some say, that as our Lord was not sick, so he was not capable of sickness, being so perfect in his constitution or complexion; which makes for the glory of grace, and saith, That our Lord behoved to die a violent death, there being no principle in him tending to a natural death, though notwithstanding he died most willingly to satisfy justice for sinners. And this may serve to explain these words, *That he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.*

We come now to observe some things from the words. And 1. From the condition our Lord is described to come to the world in; *observe*, That the Messiah, the Lord's servant that was to redeem his people, was to become man. This is here supposed and prophesied of, as the first step of his humiliation, he is called *a man;* and it is an aggravation of it, that he was to be *a man of sorrows:* Or taking our Lord Messiah to be already come, we may take the *observation* thus, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the eternal Father is also a true and real man; a common truth yet a truth fundamental to the gospel, whereof we are not to think the less or the worse, because

cauſe it is a common truth: *When the fulneſs of time came* (ſaith the apoſtle, Gal. iv. 4.) *God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law;* who, as it is, Phil. ii. *Thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet took upon him the ſhape of a ſervant, and was made in likeneſs of men, and being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient,* &c. So Heb. ii. 14. it is ſaid of him, That *foraſmuch as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame,* &c. And ver. 11. *Both he that ſanctifieth and they that are ſanctified are all of one, for which cauſe he is not aſhamed to call them brethren;* and ver. 16. *He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham, wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren;* he was made even like unto us in all things except ſin. And if we look to the way of grace, there was good reaſon for this, that the Redeemer of ſinners, behoved to be man. 1. If we conſider the interpoſed or adjoined threatning to the covenant of works, *The day that thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die;* there muſt be a ſatisfaction to juſtice, and the curſe threatened muſt be borne. 2. The curſe muſt be borne by man; the nature that ſinned muſt die; the party offending muſt ſatisfy in his own perſon, or in a ſurety. And 3. By our Lord's becoming man, 1. He came to have a right, as being near a-kin to ſinners, to redeem them. And 2. By this the law hath right to purſue and exact the debt of him. And 3. By this grace hath acceſs to commend the Redeemer of ſinners to ſinners, Heb. ii. 17, 18. and iv. 15, 16. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high prieſt,* &c. And that we have ſuch a Redeemer, it makes God reconcileable, and grace to have acceſs, 1 Tim. ii. 5. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Chriſt Jeſus,* and this gives man acceſs to come to God. 4. This makes the myſtery of godlineſs to ſhine

ſhine the more radiantly, and the wiſdom and love of God to ſhine the more conſpicuouſly through it, 1 Tim. iii. 16. *Without controverſy great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh:* and John i. 14. *The word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory*, &c.

Uſe 1. It ſerves to be a prop and foundation to our faith; we may ſay of this truth, as the apoſtle, ſpeaking of the reſurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 14. ſays, *If Chriſt be not riſen, then our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain.* If Chriſt were not man, our preaching and your hearing were in vain. 1. By this we have an evidence that our Lord is the true Meſſiah, who was to become man. 2. By this we ſee a clear way how he was liable to our debt, and how his ſatisfaction is communicable to us. And 3. In this alſo we ſee a main and moſt attractive argument to draw ſinners to Chriſt for the actual application of his purchaſe: Our Lord Jeſus is man, our brother, made of a woman, made under the law: O! this puts a ſweetneſs and lovelineſs on the Mediator, to commend him to ſinners for the engaging of their hearts to him.

And therefore, as a ſecond uſe of it, ſeeing there is a Man-Mediator, 1. We pray you, men and women, neglect not ſuch a ſalvation as is to be had by his becoming man, but let this argument prevail with you to make uſe of him, that he is a true man: And we may ſay, when this Son of man comes in the clouds to judge the world, it will be one of the greateſt aggravations of the ſin of unbelievers, that he came thus low as to be man for the good of men, and yet was not made uſe of by them. 2. Sinners that would come to him, may on this ground be confident and chearful: The Steward of grace is a friend, he is a man, their brother, and claims kindred to them, that honeſtly aim to do the will of his Father, *Whoſoever ſhall do the will of my Father*, ſaith he, Mat. xii. *the ſame is my brother, ſiſter, and mother.* Sinners wrong

Christ and themselves often times, when they stand aloof from this cordial of consolation, that by Christ's becoming man is allowed them. Indeed if we were immediately to go to God, *who is a consuming fire*, it were no wonder that we stood at a distance; but when God is in the Mediator Christ, God-man, to reconcile the world to himself, as the word is, 2 Cor. vi. *Let us*, as the apostle saith, Heb. iv. ult. *come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* O! make this use of it, because he is a friend that sits on the throne.

2*dly*, *Observe*, That our Lord Jesus did not only become man, but a man in an exceeding low and afflicted condition. It had been much for the Son of God to have come in the shape of a man, though he had been emperor of the whole world; but he thought not that meet; for since it was his errand in his first coming, not to judge, but to save the world, he came not to be ministred unto, but to minister; and therefore John xiii. 12. he washeth the feet of his disciples. We may take both the branches of the doctrine together, our Lord Jesus not only became man, but he was a man without all worldly grandeur or pomp, in a low and mean condition; and not only did he want that grandeur, but he had much affliction, shame, and sorrow in the place of it. Need we to prove this? any who are acquainted with the history of the gospel know it; he was for the whole tract of his life, not only in a low condition, but a man of sorrows, griefs, and afflictions; under much persecution, contempt, and reproach. We might instance this 1. In his birth. 2. In his life. And 3. In his death. The meanness and lowness of his condition, and the afflictions he met with appear clearly in all these, wherein ye may behold the glory of grace and of truth; for the more low he became, the more doth the glory of grace shine, and the more also doth the glory of truth, in that he fulfilled all righteousness.

1. Then

1. Then for his low condition, and that 1. In his birth, he was not born of any of the greateſt queens; however, the birth of Mary was noble, yet ſhe was in a mean condition, eſpouſed to a carpenter; he was not born in a great palace, but in a common inn, which too being taken up with gueſts, his mother was thruſt out, or conſtrained to betake herſelf to a ſtable, where our bleſſed Lord is brought forth, and laid in a manger, crib, or ſtall, out of which the beaſts eat their meat, for his cradle; neither was the room hung with rich hangings and tapeſtry, as the rooms of great ones uſe to be. 2. In his life he was low; for no ſooner is he born but his mother is forced to flee away with him to Egypt; he dare not be ſeen; and when he returns, he cohabits with, and ſerves his ſuppoſed father and his mother, was obedient to them, ran their errands, and wrought their work; therefore he is called, Mark vi. the *carpenter*. There is no outward or worldly pomp and grandeur here, and thus he was for the ſpace of thirty years. And then when he came to his public miniſtry, he hath no great men for his followers and diſciples, but a few poor fiſhermen, over whom he exalts not himſelf loftily, but humbles himſelf to waſh their feet, and to ſerve them. And to hold forth this a little further, ye may take notice of ſome ſcripture expreſſions to that purpoſe; as namely that of Luke ix. 58. *Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head;* that of John i. 10, 11. *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not; he came unto his own, and his own received him not;* tho' he could have made a thouſand worlds at a word; yet ſo low was he, that he had not a foot of ground to lay claim to, or to lean his bleſſed head on. And if we look to Luke viii. we find that he was provided for in his neceſſity by ſome few women, ſuch as Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Suſanna, and others, *who miniſtred*

ſtred to him of their ſubſtance; he lived upon the charity of others; and yet 2 Cor. viii. *By his poverty he made many rich:* And when he went from place to place, his diet was often a ſeeking, neither do we read of any great cheer he had, but of ſome barley loaves and fiſhes: And often the diſciples were ſent to ſeek for meat for him. And 3, When it comes to his death, O! how very low is he brought there? When he is crucified, they hang him up betwixt two thieves, as the moſt notorious malefactor of the three; and he could hardly come under greater reproach than was caſt upon him at his death; and as a dead man being really dead, he is laid in the grave and buried, as if death had gotten the victory over him; and ſo he dies a moſt ſhameful death, after he had lived a moſt mean and abject life.

2. For his afflicted condition, it is clear if we conſider, what troubles did accompany him in his life, and at his death. No ſooner was he born, but he is perſecuted by Herod, ſo that himſelf and his parents muſt needs flee down to Egypt, and they being but poor folks, behoved in ſo long a journey to meet with many difficulties: That they were but poor may be ſeen by Mary's offering after her purification. And when he came forth in his public miniſtry, at his very entry to it, he was moſt terribly tempted of the devil, taking occaſion of his hunger after long faſting; and all along the exerciſe of it, what contradiction did he meet with from the ſcribes and Phariſees? How did he travel on his feet from place to place? Often ſubject to wearineſs and fainting; ſometimes men will not ſo much as give him lodging, which he ſuffers patiently, and rebukes his diſciples for their impatience and prepoſterous zeal, Luke ix. Many calumnies and reproaches were caſt upon him; He was called *Beelzebub, a deceiver, a friend of publicans and ſinners;* How did ſome of his friends, according to the fleſh, ſnarl at him, and offer to bind him as a mad-

mad-man? What plots and conſpiracies were laid and made to take away his life? And when it came to the upſhot of all, Peter ſhamefully denied him and all the other diſciples forſook him, and fled. Many other things befel him, as may be ſeen in the hiſtory of his ſufferings, written by the evangeliſts. We read that he wept thrice, to let us know that it was his frequent and familiar exercise; and a little before his death we read that he was in a great agony, and did therein ſweat blood, and offered prayers with ſtrong cries and tears, but we read not that he did laugh, or that ever any wordly mirth was found in him, which clearly makes out this truth, *That he was a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief.*

For *Uſe*, it would require the tongues of men and angels to ſpeak of it, it being the moſt remarkable and ſoul-refreſhing ſubject that ever the world heard of, even that of which the angels ſing, Luke ii. 10, 11. *Good tidings of great joy which ſhall be to all people, that unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Chriſt the Lord. And this ſhall be a ſign to you, ye ſhall find the Babe wrapped in ſwaddling cloaths, lying in a manger.* Sure we ſhould not ſing leſs, but more than angels, men being more concerned than angels in theſe things; and therefore, 1. Behold, believe and wonder, that he 'that was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich;' that 'he that was Lord of all became ſervant to all;' that he 'that was the infinite God, the expreſs image of his Father's perſon, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet humbled himſelf and became of no reputation; and took on him the form of a ſervant,' &c. Behold, we ſay, believe, and wonder at this, 1. In reſpect of the cauſe it came from, to wit, everlaſting love; he did and ſuffered all this moſt willingly, there was no conſtraint on him, but as it is, Pſal. xl. 'He delighted to do his Father's will; he had power to lay down his

'his life and to take it up again.' 2. In reſpect of the end, it was not to add to his own glory; for as God, his glory being infinite, it was not, neither is, capable of diminution or addition; but he became poor that we might be made rich; he was a man of ſorrows, that we might be made to rejoice; he wept that we might laugh; he wanted that we might have: Is not this love ſtooping thus low to be wondered at? 'God commendeth his love to us,' ſaith the apoſtle, Rom. v. 8. 'That while we were yet ſinners Chriſt 'died for us;' and ſaith himſelf, John xv. 'Greater 'love hath no man than this, that a man lay down 'his life for his friends; but when we were enemies 'Chriſt died for us;' were it then an unſuitable uſe of this doctrine, to be beholding, believing, and wondering at his love, and to be often thinking and ſaying, 'What is man that God ſhould be mindful 'of him,' as to ſend the heir of all things, his own Son into the world, as his great ambaſſador and commiſſioner, to negotiate a peace betwixt himſelf and rebel-ſinners, which he was to purchaſe by becoming ſo very low, and by ſuffering ſo very much?

2. See in this the great evil and hurt of ſin, and the difficulty of making peace with God and a ſinner who hath provoked God. Is it a little matter that made our Lord condeſcend and ſtoop ſo low? O! if men knew the evil of ſin! and that e'er juſtice could be ſatisfied, the Son of God behoved to become man, and a deeply humbled man: The ſword of his avenging juſtice, behoved to awake againſt him, and ſmite the man that was his Fellow, rather than that ſin ſhould go unpuniſhed, and juſtice ſhould want ſatisfaction! Beware ſlightly to boaſt and brag of mercy, or to think it eaſy to make your peace with God; and remember, that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

3. See in this, much condeſcenſion in our bleſſed Lord Jeſus; and a motive as well as a copy of patience

tience in him, who is content to be made of a woman, made under the law, and takes on a mean and afflicted ſtate of life in the world. It is a wonder that Chriſt's members ſhould take ſo ill with a mean, ſuffering, and hard lot, ſeeing their lot is far, very far from the contempt, reproaches, ſorrows, weights, and griefs that accompanied their Head and Lord; and it is a ſhame that believers minds and hearts ſhould be ſet ſo much on theſe things, that he who was and is their Lord and Maſter, and the Heir of all things, poſſeſſed ſo little of; or that they ſhould place their happineſs in whole or in part in the enjoyment of theſe things, or their miſery in the want of them. More patience under the croſs, under watchings, wearineſs, reproaches, *&c.* would become us much better; our bleſſed Lord Jeſus had a great many more.

4. Take this to be not only a motive to patience in reſpect of outward things, but a ſtep and ground of encouragement to go forward to Chriſt with every want ſpiritual and temporal. It is much that our Lord became man, but it is more that he became a man under griefs, afflictions, ſorrows, and temptations, and was ſubject to death itſelf; and that he hath bowels of ſympathy from experience of theſe temptations, vexations, and ſorrows, as they are ſinleſs, as is clear from Heb. ii. and iv. at the cloſe; he knows what hunger, thirſt, poverty, contempt, reproach, and perſecution are; he knows what it is to be ſet upon with the violence of a temptation, though there was no ſin in him to comply with it.

5. Obſerve here a moſt real Saviour, ſince he is a ſuffering Saviour. Why did our Lord become thus low? but that he might come under the curſe in the ſeveral degrees of it, for the ſatisfying of juſtice for our ſins. And ſee in every part of Chriſt's ſuffering, a reality of the grace and love of God; a reality in the covenant and bargain of redemption; a reality in Chriſt's ſatisfying of juſtice, and performing his engagement

gagement according to the tenor of that tranſaction. And ſeeing there is a reality in this Saviour, and in his ſuffering and ſatisfying of divine juſtice, and in the price that he paid to the full; *Put* not this Saviour *again to open ſhame*, as the word is, Heb. vi. 6. *Tread not the Son of God under foot*, neither *account the blood of the covenant an unholy thing; do not deſpite to the Spirit of grace*, as it is, Heb. x. 29. He hath ſuffered enough already, let him not be a ſufferer again; O! grieve him not by your unbelief, but give him credit by adventuring your ſouls on him upon his own terms; you yourſelves will have the advantage, and he the glory. This is the pure ſimple truth of the goſpel; do not only receive it as a truth, but receive him that holds it forth, and let your hearts cloſe with him, and your faith feed upon him, *who became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich.* Happy they for evermore who are made rich through his poverty, and miſerable are they, and much more miſerable eternally will they be, whoſe practice ſaith, that they think they have another way to be happy than by his ſuffering and ſatisfaction, and in diſdain reject both him and it.

SER-

SERMON XVIII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 2, 3.

Verſe 2. *For he ſhall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comelineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him.*

Verſe 3. *He is deſpiſed and rejected of men; a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.*

IF our hearts were ſuitably tender, the reading of of theſe words, knowing of whom they are ſpoken, would ſome way prick and wound them: It is hard to determine, (though it may be we ſhould not make the compariſon) whether there is more grace in our Lord's condeſcendence, or more wickedneſs and perverſeneſs in the unkind and ill treatment that he gets from ſinners: But ſurely there is much grace on the one ſide in his coming ſo low, and much wickedneſs and perverſeneſs on the other ſide; for what meets he with, even the bleſſed Jeſus, *Who is the glory and praiſe of all his ſaints;* yea, *the brightneſs of his Father's glory? He is deſpiſed and rejected, and we eſteemed him not:* Even when he thus humbled himſelf, and took on him our nature, and was and is proſecuting the work of our ſalvation, and evidencing his grace in an unconceivable manner.

Theſe are the two things that are ſpoken of here, his condeſcending to be a man, and a meer man; and which is yet more, *a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief;* which if we believed, and knew really

what he were, that it was even he, *by whom all things were created, who is the beginning of the creation of God, the first born of every creature;* yea, he *for whom all things were created*, for whose glory the world and all things in it were made and continue; he for whom all things are as their last end, and through whom they are preserved in their being, and governed in their operations, and shall be seen to tend to his glory in the close; we would certainly wonder more at this his condescendence: And yet alas, it is he that is *despised and rejected*, and that *we hid, as it were, our faces from*, and would not give him our countenance: It is he by whom the world was made that is despised, and we esteemed him not. And this is the *second* thing in the words which we are now to speak to, even the abominably unsuitable meeting that men give to our Lord Jesus, who hath so far condescended, as to leave some way his Father's glory, not to receive a kingdom of this world, but to be trod upon in it as a worm: He is despised and rejected, and we will not entertain him, nor make him welcome when he cometh: *We esteemed him not.*

Only take this advertisement for clearing of the words, and for grounding of the doctrine, that this that is spoken of Christ's humiliation, and man's stumbling at it, is not precisely to be restricted to his humiliation in his own person only, and mens stumbling at that, for it is given as the reason of mens stumbling and offending at Christ in all times: But it is to be extended to Christ in his gospel and ordinances throughout all ages, and so it comes in as the reason why so few believe on him. If ye ask the reason why men do not now believe and receive Christ in the offer of the gospel? Here it is, for *we esteemed him not*, for *he shall grow up before him as a tender plant:* He shall be mean and contemptible to the men of the world, and in an afflicted condition, therefore he is not esteemed, therefore he is not believed on.

These

Theſe two are the main *doctrines* to be ſpoken to here. 1. That Jeſus Chriſt who thus condeſcends and humbles himſelf for the ſalvation of loſt ſinners, is not eſteemed, but deſpiſed and undervalued, which is implied in the words, *when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty that we ſhould deſire him;* and is more clearly holden out in the following words, *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.* 2. That this undervaluing and little eſteeming of Jeſus Chriſt, is the great ground of mens unbelief, or the reaſon why men do not believe on him, even becauſe they think him not worthy the receiving; two very clear truths in the words and in experience, though as ſad in their conſequents.

As to the 1. Which is this, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is uſually and ordinarily exceedingly undervalued, and little eſteemed of by the men of the world, to whom he is offered in the goſpel: There are two things implied and ſuppoſed here in and about the doctrine, that will clear it, and be as two reaſons of it. 1. That he hath no form nor comelineſs, and no beauty whereof he ſhould be deſired; which holdeth out this, that men are ordinarily taken with, and ſeek after worldly grandeur and greatneſs, ſplendor and beauty; that is it that filleth mens eyes, and is that which Chriſt wanted. This we ſay is one reaſon why Chriſt is ſo little thought of, even becauſe he cometh not with external pomp, obſervation and grandeur, nor with great temporal gifts to his followers: That which mainly is deſirable to natural men, is that which hath earthly beauty in it; a very deceitful conſideration and ground, though ſuch an one as men are often carried away with, and therefore they deſpiſe and reject the Saviour. 2. Which is another reaſon of the doctrine, and alſo clearly implied, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt's humiliation and coming ſo low for man's ſake, his very condeſcending and ſtooping for their good, is the great ground of their ſtumbling at him; and becauſe of that he is the leſs thought of:

Even the very height of his grace, and that great ſtretch thereof that the Son of God became thus low as to become man, a mean man, and a man of ſorrows, is a greater ground of ſtumbling to men, than if he had never become thus low: Now theſe two being ſuppoſed, and thus explained, the *doctrine* is clear; to wit, that Jeſus Chriſt that became man, and performed the ſatisfaction due to the juſtice of God for our ſins, is uſually and ordinarily diſeſteemed and undervalued by them to whom he is offered in the goſpel. 1. It was ſo under the Old Teſtament, and is ſo likewiſe under the New: What is almoſt all the goſpel ſpent on? but to hold forth Chriſt upon the one ſide to be a man of ſorrows, and upon the other ſide to ſhew that men eſteemed him not: How was he undervalued at his birth, when his mother was thruſt out to a ſtable, and he laid in a manger? And no ſooner doth he appear in the exerciſe of his public miniſtry, but his friends offend at him, and look on him as a diſtracted man, Mark iii. His countrymen contemn him, and were offended at him, Mark vi. *Is not this*, ſay they, *the carpenter, the ſon of Mary, the brother of James and Joſes?* And how was he eſteemed, or rather diſeſteemed and undervalued at his death? So that it is ſaid; Acts iii. 14. 'They denied the holy and juſt one, and deſired that a murderer ſhould 'be granted unto them:' They rejected the prince of life, and choſe Barabbas; and judging him not worthy to live, they cry *away with him:* Hence our Lord ſaith, Matt. xi. 'Bleſſed is he that is not offended in 'me,' which inſinuates that there were but very few to whom his humiliation proved not a ſtumbling block. 3. If we conſult experience we will find this to be true. How little is he thought of among Turks? amongſt whom his precious name is blaſphemed, tho' they pretend more reſpect to him than meer heathens do: How little is he thought of among the Jews, who call him a deceiver? And if we come nearer, even to the

the Christian church, and to such as profess their faith of his being the eternal Son of God, equal with the Father, that he is Judge of quick and dead, and that they look for salvation through him; yet if it be put to a trial, how few are they that will be found to esteem of him aright? since there are but few that believe the report that is made of him, but few that receive him as he is offered in the gospel, few that have but such respect to him as to prefer him to their idols, and that give him the first and chief seat in their hearts: And if we consider how little eager pursuing there is after him, that he may be enjoyed; and how indifferent people are, whether they have or want him: how many things men dote upon and prefer to Jesus Christ, as the Lord complains, Jer. ii. 13. 'My 'people have committed two evils, they have forsaken 'me, the Fountain of living waters, and have digged to 'themselves cisterns, even broken cisterns that can hold 'no water;' the thing will be clear beyond all debate. We may take in another branch of the doctrine here, when he saith, *We esteemed him not;* and it is this, that even believers are in so far as unrenewed, inclined, and not without culpable accession to this same sin of undervaluing of Jesus Christ; it is indeed true that the apostle Peter saith in his first epistle, chap. ii. verse 7. *To you that believe he is precious;* which place, though it confirm the first part of this doctrine, that to them that believe not he is not precious, but a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; albeit that believers being compared with unbelievers, have some precious esteem of Jesus Christ; yet if we consider the corrupt nature that in part cleaves to them, the degree of their estimation of him, and that it is but very little and low, in respect of what it should be, and the many peevish fits, to's and fro's, up's and down's that they are subject to, so that though they were just now fresh and lively in the exercise of their faith, and of their estimation of Christ, yet within

within a little, even by and by, they give way again to their jealouſies; the doctrine will alſo hold true of them, *We eſteemed him not.*

We ſhall give the *ſecond doctrine* (and then ſpeak to the uſe of both jointly) which is this, That there is nothing more culpably acceſſory to the abounding of unbelief, than the poor thoughts and little eſtimation that men have of Jeſus Chriſt; the undervaluing of him is the great ground and reaſon why they believe not on him: And on the contray, if the hearers of the goſpel had higher thoughts, and a more precious eſteem of Chriſt, and valued him according to his invaluable worth, there would be more believing in him than there is. When the goſpel comes to invite men to the wedding, Matt. xxii. When Chriſt is praiſed and commended as to what he is, what he hath purchaſed, and what he freely offereth to ſinners; it is ſaid, *That thoſe who were bidden, made light of it, and went away one to his farm, another to his merchandize*, &c. When Chriſt was ſpoken of, and the offer of life made through him, they undervalued and deſpiſed it, and made light of the offer, and therefore turned their backs, for they thought more of the houſe, of the oxen, of the farm, and of the married wife, than they thought of him. Acts xvii. When Paul is preaching Chriſt at Athens, the philoſophers, and orators, theſe learned heads, deſpiſe and deſdain him as a ſetter forth of ſome ſtrange and uncouth God. If we compare this with its contrary, it will be further clear, to wit, wherever there is an eſtimation of Chriſt, it proves a help to faith and a ground of it; ſo wherever Chriſt is deſpiſed, diſeſteemed and undervalued, it conceives in men, and is a ground to them of theſe three. 1. It cools or rather keeps cool their love and and affection to him; where he is diſeſteemed and undervalued, he cannot be loved; and people in that caſe become like thoſe that are brought in Jer. xliv. 17. ſaying, *It was better with us when we did bake cakes*

cakes to the queen of heaven : The Lord is counted by them to be as *a wilderneſs and land of darkneſs ;* and they ſay, as in Jer. ii. 31. *We are lords, and will come no more unto thee :* And when men eſteem not Chriſt, they ſeek not after him, they care not for an intereſt in him, they truſt not to him : When a man valueth a pearl, he will readily ſell all that he hath, that he may buy it ; but that which is not eſteemed, there will be no care to come by it. 2. It hath influence to obſtruct mens giving him credit, which is of the very eſſence of faith, ſo that, where he is not eſteemed of, he is not, he cannot be believed on ; the former ſays, that we will not be married to him ; this ſays we will not believe him, nor truſt the reality of his offer : Where he is not eſteemed of, he is not taken to be really in good earneſt, and faithful in what he ſays : His offers are looked upon as having neither ſolidity nor reality in them, therefore, Rev. xix. theſe two are put together ; firſt, it is ſaid, *Bleſſed are they that are called to the marriage ſupper of the Lamb ;* and then it is ſubjoined, *Theſe are the true and faithful ſayings of God :* So that when Chriſt is not eſteemed of, he is not thought worth the crediting and truſting to. And it is on this ground that the Lord founds his controverſy with his profeſſing people, Jer. ii. 5. ‘ What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that ‘ they have gone far from me, and have walked after ‘ vanity, and are become vain ?’ They undervalued his word, they thought him not worthy of credit, and therefore they turned the back on him : The ſame is inſinuated by the Lord, Mic. vi. 3. ‘ O my people, ‘ what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I ‘ wearied thee ? Teſtify againſt me.’ 3. This little eſteem of Chriſt weakens hope or expectation of any good that men may have from him ; when we eſteem him not, there is no expectation of getting our needs ſupplied, and our wants made up by him, nor of attaining in him the happineſs that we would be at, and there-

therefore there are no ſerious addreſſes made to him for the ſame. Theſe three, love to him, truſt in him, hope from and through him, being the prime graces in a Chriſtian, when they are weakened, unbelief moſt certainly in ſo far prevaileth: And it being Chriſt's worthineſs, and the eſtimation thereof that gives ground to all theſe; then ſure, when he is not eſteemed but undervalued, theſe muſt alſo fail in their exerciſe. Now laying all theſe together, there can hardly be any thing more culpably acceſſory to the abounding of unbelief, than the undervaluing of precious Jeſus Chriſt; it is impoſſible that he can be cordially welcomed where he is not at all eſteemed.

As for the uſes of theſe doctrines, they are of large extent, ſerving to make manifeſt a root of bitterneſs, that undoes multitudes of ſouls, and which men and women will not eaſily be perſuaded to believe. Let this therefore be the firſt uſe of it, To diſcover a great ſin that is incident to the hearers of this goſpel; among many other things that may be charged on them, this is one and not the leaſt, even little eſteem of Jeſus Chriſt; ſo little, that when he is ſpeaking, they count him ſcarce worth the hearing: Hence is the ſlumbering and ſleeping of ſo many when he is preached to them, which holds forth ſomething of the nature of all men and women; this deſpiſing, undervaluing, and thinking little of Chriſt, is a ſin that may for a long time cleave faſt and cloſe to the hearers of the goſpel; it may be ye will think this a ſtrange and uncouth charge, and that whoever diſeſteem, ye do certainly eſteem him much; but it were better ye were ſeriouſly and humbly ſaying with the prophet here, *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not:* There are many who never once ſuſpect themſelves as guilty of, or chargeable of this evil; for whoſe conviction, let me ſpeak but a few words: Is there not ſuch a bitter root in you? If it be natural to all men and women, how comes it to paſs that ye are free of it? Is there nothing

nothing of the ſeed of the ſerpent in you? And if there be, will there not be hatred at the ſeed of the woman in you? Are ye any other ſort of hearers than they were to whom this was ſpoken? Were they not hearers of the goſpel as well as ye? He here ſpeaks of hearers of the goſpel in all ages, and yet ye will diſdain to take with this ſin, and will account it to be an uncouth, if not an unjuſt charge and imputation, to ſay of you that ye are undervaluers and deſpiſers of Chriſt: but the reaſon of it is twofold, the firſt whereof is, Becauſe ye know not what Chriſt's worth is, and therefore ye do neither eſteem him, nor know that ye diſeſteem and undervalue him: whereas they who have won to ſome knowledge of his worth are always, or very often complaining that they cannot get him ſuitably thought of and eſteemed. The ſecond reaſon is, Becauſe ye know not yourſelves, and therefore ye take ſelf-love and eſtimation of yourſelves to be love to him and eſtimation of him; ye think yourſelves ſo well, that ye cannot endure to think that ye want any grace or good thing; and eſtimation of Chriſt being a good thing, and ye thinking that ye could not hold up your face and own the reproaching and deſpiſing of him, ye will not let it light that ye want this grace and good thing, a precious eſteem of him: But there is no greater evidence that ye are lying under the power of the deceit and deluſion of your own hearts, that your natural diſtemper and fever is not cooled and calmed, but that ye are ſtill roving in nature; and therefore, though ye be living in enmity at God and Chriſt, yet ye cannot be made ſenſible of it. We really think it ſomewhat ſtrange, that men and women ſhould live twenty, thirty, forty or fifty years under the goſpel, and yet never be brought to groan under this enmity, nor to lay to heart this ſin of undervaluing Chriſt: But if it be a truth that none naturally do love and eſteem him, then certainly many of you are groſly miſtaken, that think ye eſteem high-

ly of him: Ah! your fancied eſteem of him will be counted an undervaluing of him.

And if ye aſk, What is it to undervalue Chriſt, or when is he undervalued? I anſwer, He is undervalued. 1. When he is not matched with or married, when the match with himſelf, whereof he maketh offer, is not cloſed with upon his own terms; for what, I pray, can hinder the ending of a bargain, or finiſhing a marriage-contract, eſpecially when it is ſo full, free, and rich, on the propoſer and ſuiter's part, but either that people think it is not fit for them, or that they think nothing of it at all? And this is it that hinders cloſing with Chriſt, Matt. xxii. *They made light of it, and went away*, &c. and Pſal. lxxxi. *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me.* 2. When any thing is made equal to Chriſt, much more when any thing is preferred to him, he is undervalued and not eſteemed of; when he gets little or none of people's care and labour, little of their time, little of their love and delight, few or none of their thoughts, &c. but they are quite carried away after other things; for *where the treaſure is, there the heart will be alſo;* and were Chriſt our treaſure, and precious in our eſteem, our hearts would be more ſet on him; but it is ſtrange, ſad, and even aſtoniſhing to think, how little our ſpirits are exerciſed with the thoughts of Chriſt, how little they are taken up with longing for him and delighting in him, and yet we will think that we eſteem him. 3. Our Lord is undervalued when he is not made uſe of, and employed, and truſted to as an able and ſufficient Saviour. If there be a learned and ſkilful phyſician in a city in all or moſt diſeaſes, or an able lawyer to plead all cauſes; if men have diſeaſes to be cured, and cauſes to be pleaded, and yet do not employ ſuch a phyſician or ſuch a lawyer, but go to ſome other, though far leſs ſkilful and able, they undervalue him; it is even ſo here, when men have many ſins, and they ſeek not to

him

him for pardon, many, not only temporal wants, but alſo and mainly, many ſpiritual wants, and do not acknowledge him in them, neither ſeek to him for ſupply of them, many predominant evils; and they ſeek not to him to mortify them, many ſnares and temptations, and they do not make uſe of him to prevent and lead them by them, and many ſpiritual cauſes to be pleaded before God, or at his bar, and they do not employ him as advocate to plead for them. 4. He is undervalued when men think not themſelves happy enough in him, nor ſafe enough in bargaining with him, and when he doth not ſatisfy and fully content them, as if he were *yea and nay*, and as if *all the promiſes were not yea and amen in him;* when he is not credited entirely, and reſted upon, he is not eſteemed of, hence he complains, John v. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life:* and Matt. xxiii. *How often would I have gathered you and ye would not?* He would, to ſay ſo with reverence, fain do them a good turn, but they will not truſt him. O! how much undervaluing of Chriſt is there even among believers, when they hold and draw with him, entertain jealouſies and ſuſpicions of him, ſcarcely credit him, and when they do at any time credit him, are in a manner ready to take back their word again. How often are creature-comforts over-valued by them? And how often are the conſolations of God of ſmall account with them? Theſe, and many other ways are they, even they, in ſome conſiderable meaſure and degree guilty of undervaluing of Chriſt.

Uſe 2. Take with this ſin, acknowledge and ſeek pardon for it; it were a good token of ſome tenderneſs, to be mourning for enmity againſt Chriſt, and for undervaluing of him, as well as for drunkenneſs, fornication, theft, or any other groſs ſin. And where that gracious and right mourning that is ſpoken of, Zech. xii. 10. comes, it will be in ſpecial for this undervaluing of Chriſt to the height of piercing of him.

We would ask any of you that think ye repent, if this sin of slighting him hath pierced you as it did those, Acts ii.? It may be, some think themselves so cleanly and perfect, that ye have not many sins to mourn for, O! dreadful mistake; but though ye had no more, is not this enough that ever there should have been enmity in your bosom to Christ? And should not this prick you to the very heart, that ever ye should have so undervalued him? But readily they that see fewest sins in themselves, will own this sin least.

Use 3. It serves to be a warning to all men in nature, to consider what their condition is. Do ye that have this enmity, and are undervaluers of Christ, know what is in your hearts? And do ye consider what posture ye will be found in, if grace make not a change in the day of Christ? ye will be found amongst these despisers and haters that would not have him to reign over them. How will ye dare to appear, or in what posture will ye appear before him, when he whom ye despised shall come in the glory of his Father will all the holy angels with him, and shall sit upon the throne of his glory? And yet appear ye must. How will the conscience then gnaw, and the heart be affrighted? How will challenges awaken, yea sting and prick you on this ground, that the Son of God, the Heir of all things, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, who proposed marriage to you, was undervalued, and a match with him made light of, and that a thing of nought was put in his room and place? Will not this be a horrible accusation in that day? And if ye would consider what will be their posture that mocked and buffeted him, and plucked off his hair, that nodded with the head, and cried aha, and bade him, come down from the cross, that did scourge him, and hang him upon the cross betwixt two thieves; such a posture will all of you be in who have despised and disesteemed him; ye will meet with that same sad sentence, *Bring out these mine enemies that*

that would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me. O! what a strange punishment, suppose ye, will that be, when the Saviour of sinners shall stand by and look on, till he see vengeance executed on sinners that despised him? Think on it, for there is such a day coming, when ye must all appear before him, and when your accounts will be cast up. Suffer not yourselves to be cheated into an opinion that it will be accounted a little sin to be found under this guilt of despising Christ, and let not one of you put it off himself, and over upon another; they will be found despisers of him that would never own it, nay, even many that have preached him, and that would have been angry at prophanity in others, as may be gathered from Matth. vii. 22.

The *4th* Use serves to commend this to you as a piece of your duty, to study to know Christ, and to have the suitable impression of Christ and of his worth, as the great means contributive to the bringing you to credit him, and believe on him, and to the removing a main obstruction that hinders your faith, and that is the undervaluing of him; for if undervaluing of him be the great cause of unbelief, and that which mainly obstructs faith, then the esteeming of him from a due impression of his worth, must be a great means of, and help to faith; and the more he be esteemed of, the more will he be believed on. It hath an attractive virtue to draw sinners to love him, a screwing virtue to screw up the affections towards him; and withal a fixing and establishing virtue to settle and stay the soul upon him by believing. The soul that from the right impression of his worth esteems him, knows that it may trust to him, for he is holy and true; and hence it is, that the great thing that believers take to ground their prayers upon, is some excellency in God, some one or other of his titles and attributes upon which they fix, to bear them up, under and against any difficulty that presseth hard upon them

them. This fixes also their hope and expectation of attaining to any good thing that they want through him: And therefore upon the one side we would commend to you the study of Christ's worth, and upon the other, an high estimation of him, as that which will fix your faith, and love, and hope on him. This we see to be in a high degree in Paul, Phil. iii. *I account all things*, saith he, *to be but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of him*, and his transcendent worth; ye should not think it lost labour, to read and study these places of scripture, that shew what our Lord Jesus is in his person, natures, and offices, that ye may have the faith of his God-head fixed, and may be clear as to the excelling fulness that is in him; as namely that of, Isa. ix. 6. *To us a child is born, to us a son is given, the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, of whose kingdom and government there shall be no end.* And to study his excellent properties, his eternity, omnipotency, faithfulness, mercy, &c. common to him with the Father and Holy Ghost; and the excellent qualifications that as Mediator he is repleniſhed with; being full of grace and truth, and in all things having the pre-eminency; See Col. i. John i. 14. and Heb. 1, 2, 3, &c. The reason why we press you to this, is not only that ye may have a more clear theory and contemplation; but also and mainly that your affections may be dilighted in him, and that your faith may without stop or hesitation come to give him credit. Ignorance of Christ breeds disestimation, and disestimation makes you not to give him credit, and thus ye are kept at a distance from him. There is no study more pleasant, more precious, and more profitable. Here then is a task for you that ask what ye shall do? even to read and study the excellency of Jesus Christ, and to labour to have it well fixed in the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts; it will give

give you notable direction what to do, even that which is well-pleaſing to God, and may be very profitable to you through his bleſſing.

Uſe 5. See here the great neceſſity and conveniency of ſtudying the diſeſteem of Chriſt that is in us, as well as of ſtudying the worth that is in him, and what he hath out of love ſuffered for us: Theſe two are put together in the text; it being as needful for us to be as well acquainted with the one as with the other. We ſhall give you this uſe in two ſhort doctrines; the firſt whereof is, That it is a neceſſary duty for the hearers of the goſpel to ſtudy thoroughly, and to be convinced of, and clear in their diſeſteem of Chriſt, as well as of his worth and excellency, becauſe it awakens repentance, and maketh it flow, and thoroughly humbleth the ſinner, when he findeth this deſperate wickedneſs and perverſeneſs to be in himſelf, and maketh him truly to loath and abhor himſelf; and unleſs this deſperate wickedneſs be ſeen and felt, that great and bitter mourning ſpoken of, Zech. xii. 10. will never flow forth.

The 2*d*. is, That where folk have any juſt eſtimation of Chriſt and of his worth, and are ſenſible of the evil of unbelief, there will alſo be ſome ſenſe of the ſin of undervaluing of him; and the more ſenſe they have of the evil of unbelief, they will be the more ſenſible of their undervaluing of him. And will with the prophet here cry out, *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not:* And from both theſe ye may ſee the neceſſity of ſtudying to find out this corruption; the ſearch and diſcovery whereof will let you ſee into the evil and perverſeneſs of your nature, and ſo deeply humble you; and alſo ſerve highly to commend Chriſt and his grace to you; and without the diſcovery of this corruption, it is impoſſible ever to be humble thoroughly, or to have right thoughts of Chriſt and of his grace.

Uſe 6. It ſerves to let us ſee the neceſſity of believing in Chriſt, and of the imploying of him; becauſe there

there is no other way to be free of the challenges of undervaluing of and not esteeming of him, but by receiving of him, and believing on him.

A *7th Use* may be added, and is, That the more there be that despise Christ, and the greater difficulty there be in believing on him, the more reason have they to be thankful in whom he graciously works any suitable estimation of himself, and brings them to believe on him. Those who have got any glimpse of his glory which hath lifted him high in their estimation to the drawing forth of their faith and love after him, should praise him for it. It is he, and only he that opened your eyes to see him, and gave you that estimation of him, and circumcised your hearts to love him; let him therefore have all the praise and glory of it. This is the word of God; and may he himself bless it to you thro' Jesus Christ!

SERMON XIX.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 4, 5.

Verse 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

THIS is a most wonderful subject that the prophet is here discoursing of, even that which concerneth

eth the sufferings of our blessed Lord Jesus, by way of prediction several hundreds of years before his incarnation. It was much that he was to be *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;* but this was more, that *he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* There is wonderful grace upon the one side, that our Lord became so very low; and wonderful contempt and enmity on the other side, that we despised him, and esteemed him not, even because of his lowness.

In the words now read, and that follow, the prophet sets himself to remove the offence that men took at our Lord's humiliation, by shewing them, that although he became so low, yet he was not to be the less esteemed for that: And the ground which he lays down to remove the offence is in the first words of the text, which in sum is this, that there was nothing in himself wherefore he should have been brought so low, there was no sin in him, neither was there any guile found in his mouth, but he was graciously pleased to take on him that which we should have born; and therefore men ought not to stumble, and offend at his stooping to bear that which would with its weight have crushed them eternally; and that he did this to make their peace with God. In the *6th* verse, he shews how it came to pass that he stooped so low, *All we*, saith he, *like sheep have gone astray, and turned every one of us to our own way, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.* We had lost ourselves, but God in the depth of his eternal wisdom, love, and good-will, found the way to save us; wherein, to speak so, a covenant was transacted betwixt God and the Mediator, who becomes answerable for our sins, which are transferred on him. From the *7th* verse to the *10th* he goes on, shewing the execution of this transaction, and how the bondsman performed all according to his engagement; and from the *10th* verse to the close, we have the promises made to him for his satisfaction. The scope is, to remove the scandal

of the croſs, ſo to hold out our Lord's purſuing the work of ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God for elect ſinners, and the good ſucceſs he had in it.

In the *4th* and *5th* verſes we have three things, 1. This ground aſſerted, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our ſorrows.* 2. Mens enmity aggravated from this, *Yet we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted.* In the very mean time that he condeſcended to ſtoop ſo low for us, and to bear that which we ſhould have borne, we eſteemed him but little, we looked on him as a man under a plague. 3. This is more fully explained, ver. 5. *But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities*, he was ſo handled for our ſins; and *the chaſtiſement of our peace was on him*, that which made our peace with God was on him; *By his ſtripes we are healed*, the ſtripes that wounded and killed him, cured us.

We have here then rather as it were a ſad narration, than a propheſy of the goſpel, holding out a part of our Lord's ſufferings, yet a clear foundation of the conſolation of the people of God; it being the ground of all our faith of the pardon of ſin, of our peace with God, and of our confident appearing before him, that our Lord was content to be thus dealt with, and to *give his back to the ſmiters, and his cheeks to them that pluckt off the hair.*

We ſhall clear the words in the aſſertion, which will ſerve to clear the words of the whole chapter, and alſo of the doctrines to be drawn from it. 1. The thing that Chriſt bore is called *griefs and ſorrows*, by which we underſtand the effects that ſin brings on men in the world; for it is the ſame that in the *5th* verſe is called his being *wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquity:* It is a wounding that iniquity cauſeth, and meritoriouſly procureth; it is not ſin itſelf, but the effect of ſin, to wit, the puniſhment, the ſorrow and grief that ſin bringeth with it, called

griefs

griefs and sorrows; partly because grief and sorrow is necessarily joined with sin, partly to shew the extremity and exceeding greatness of this grief and sorrow, and the bitter fruits that sin brings with it. 2. How is it said that Christ hath *borne* and carried their griefs and sorrows? By this we understand not only Christ's removing them, as he removed sicknesses and diseases, as it is said, Matt. viii. 16, 17. but also, and mainly his actual and real enduring of them, as the phrase is frequently used in the scripture; *That man shall bear his iniquity*, or he shall bear his sin, Lev. v. and many other places; it sets out a real inflicting of the punishment that sin deserves, on him. 3. That it is said *our* griefs, and *our* sorrows, it is not needlessly or superfluously set down, but to meet with the offence that men take at Christ's humbling himself so low. As if he had said, what mean you to stumble at Christ's coming so low, and being so afflicted? It was not for his own sins, but for ours, that he was so handled; and they are called *our* griefs and sorrows, 1. Because we by our sins procured them, they were of our deserving, and due to us, the debt was ours, though he, as our surety, took it on himself. 2. Because, tho' the elect have distinct reckonings, and peculiar sins, some more, some fewer, some greater, some lesser, yet they are all put to Christ's account; there is a combination of them, a gathering of them all on him, as the word is, ver. vi. *He hath laid on him*, or made to meet on him, *the iniquities of us all.*

The meaning then of the assertion is this; surely this is the cause of Christ's humiliation, and this makes him not only to become man, but to be a mean, poor man, and have a comfortless and afflicted life in the world, that he hath taken on him that punishment, curse, and wrath that was due to us for our sins; and therefore we ought not to be offended and stumbled at him.

Now because Socinians, the great enemies of Christ's

ſatisfaction, and of the comfort of his people, labour to elude this place, and to make Chriſt only an exemplary Saviour, and deny that he really and actually did undergo theſe griefs and ſorrows for the ſins of the elect; we ſhall a little clear and confirm the expoſition we have given. The queſtion is not about taking away of ſin, but about the manner of removing it. They ſay that it is by God's pardoning of it without a ſatisfaction. We ſay it is by Chriſt's ſatisfaction; ſo the difficulty in expounding the words, is, whether to expound them of Chriſt's removing our ſorrows and griefs from us, or of his bearing of them for our ſins, and ſo really taking them away: And that this ſcripture means not a ſimple removing of them, as he did remove ſickneſs, Mat. viii. 17. but a real taking them on himſelf, and bearing them in order to the ſatisfaction of the juſtice of God for our ſins; we ſhall give theſe reaſons to confirm it: 1. Becauſe theſe words are to be underſtood of ſuch a bearing of ſorrows and griefs, as made Chriſt to be contemptible and deſpiſed by others: This is clear from the ſcope; for they are given as a reaſon why Chriſt was rejected and deſpiſed, as a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; and why men ſhould not ſtumble at him for all that; becauſe it was for them. Now, if he had only removed ſorrows from them, as he did ſickneſs, it had not been a cauſe of his ſorrow and grief, nor of any man's ſtumbling at him, but had rather been a cauſe of his exaltation in mens eſteem? But it is given here as a cauſe of that which went before in the firſt part of the 3*d* ver. and alſo a reaſon why men ſhould not ſtumble at him, and withal an aggravation of their guilt who did ſtumble at him. Now it is clear, that the ground of the Jews deſpiſing and mocking him, was not his removing of ſickneſſes and diſeaſes, but his ſeeming to be given over unto the power of death. 2. Becauſe that which is called here *bearing of ſorrows and griefs*, is in the words following called a *being*

a *being wounded for our transgressions*, which imports not only that he was wounded, but that our iniquities were the cause of his being wounded, and that the desert of them was laid on him. 3. This wounding is holden forth to be the *stripes* whereby *we are healed;* and *all we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the inquities of us all;* we did the wrong, but he made the amends; and it was such a wounding as proves a cure to us, and makes way for our peace and reconciliation with God; and such, as without it there is no healing for us; for *by his stripes we are healed;* it is by his swallowing up the river and torrent of wrath that was in our way, and would have drowned us eternally, had not he interposed for us, that we escape. 4. Consider the parallel places to this in the New Testament, and we find that this place holds forth Christ's real and actual bearing of our sorrows and griefs: I shall only name three; the *first* is that of 2 Cor. v. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* which can be no other way expounded but of Christ's being made an offering and sacrifice for our sins; he not being a sinner himself but becoming our surety, and engaging to pay our debt, and to pay down the price for the satisfaction of divine justice: he is reckoned to be the sinner, and our sins are imputed to him, and he is dealt with as a sinner. A *second* place is that of Gal. iii. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for us, as it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* The sorrows and griefs that Isaiah says here, he should bear, and there expounded by the apostle, to be his being made a curse, or his bearing of the curse that we should have born; it is not meant simply of his removing the curse from us, but it also sets forth the manner how he removed it, to wit, by his own bearing of it himself, being nailed to the cross, according

to

to the threatening given out before. The *third* place is that of, 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Who, his ownſelf bore our ſins in his own body on the tree;* where there is a direct reference to this place of Iſaiah, which is cited for confirmation of what the apoſtle ſaith, and every word is full and hath a ſpecial ſignification and emphaſis in it, *He his ownſelf bore*, the ſame word that is here, and *our ſins* and *in his own body*, and *on the tree*; intimating the loweſt ſtep of his humiliation, *by whoſe ſtripes ye were healed;* for *ye were as ſheep going aſtray*, &c. By his bearing of our ſins the burden of ſin was taken off us, and we are ſet free.

I know that place of Mat. viii. 17. hath its own difficulty, and therefore I ſhall ſpeak a word for clearing of it; he hath ſpoken, verſe 16. of Chriſt's *healing all that were ſick*, and then ſubjoins in the 17th verſe, *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by Iſaiah the prophet, ſaying, Himſelf took our infirmities and bore our ſickneſſes;* whereupon theſe enemies of Chriſt would infer, that this place of ſcripture hath no other, nor further meaning, but of Chriſt's curing of ſome ſick people, and of the deputed or committed power which he hath to pardon ſins; but we ſuppoſe that the reaſons which we have already given makes it clear, that this cannot be the meaning of the place, to which we ſhall add firſt a reaſon or two, and ſecondly give you the true meaning of it.

The reaſons why this cannot be the meaning of the place, are, 1. Becauſe Acts viii. 32. this ſcripture is ſpoken of as being daily a fulfilling by Chriſt; and therefore it could not be fulfilled in thoſe few days wherein he was in the fleſh upon earth. 2. Becauſe this bearing of our griefs and ſorrows is ſuch a piece of Chriſt's humiliation, as thereby he took on himſelf all the griefs and ſorrows of all the elect at once, both of thoſe who lived in Iſaiah's time, and of thoſe who lived before, and ſince his time, and therefore cannot be reſtricted to the curing of temporal diſeaſes in days

the days wherein he was on earth; nay, not the pardoning of the sins of the elect then living, there being many elect before and since comprehended in this his satisfaction for the sins of the elect that were dead, and to be born, as well as for the sins of them that were then living.

2. For the meaning of the place, 1. We are not to look on Christ's curing of sicknesses and diseases, Mat. viii. 16. as a proper fulfilling of this place, Isa. liii. 4. but as many scriptures are spoke of by way of allusion to other scriptures, so is this; there is indeed some fulfilling of the one in the other, and some resemblance betwixt the one and the other, and the resemblance is this, even to shew Christ's tenderness to the outward condition of mens bodies, whereby he evidenced his tenderness and respect to the inward sad condition of their immortal souls, whereinto they were brought through their sin; the great thing aimed at by the prophet. 2. If we consider the griefs and sorrows that Christ bore complexly in their causes and effects, he in healing those of diseases and sicknesses, bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; because when he took on our debt, he took it on with all the consequences of it; and so, though Christ took on no disease in his own person, for we read not that he was ever sick; yet in taking on the debt in common of the elect, he virtually took on all sicknesses and diseases, or what they suffered in the diseases, or should have suffered, he took it on together; and hereby he had a right, to speak so, to the carrying them off, he had respect to the cause of them, to wit, sin; therefore to such as he cured, he says very often, *Thy sins be forgiven thee;* he studied to remove that in most of them he did deal with; and so looking on our Lord as taking on our sins complexly, with the cause, as having a right to remove all the effects of sin, evidencing itself in the removing of these diseases, whereof sin was the cause, these words may be thus fulfilled; and so they

they are clear, and the doctrine alſo; we have here no mere exemplary Saviour that hath done no more but confirmed his doctrine, and given us a copy how to do and behave, but he hath really and actually borne our ſorrows and griefs, and removed our debt, by undergoing the puniſhment due to us for ſin.

Obſerve here 1ſt, That ſin, in no fleſh, no not in the elect themſelves, is without ſorrow and grief; tribulation and anguiſh are knit to it, or it hath theſe following on it; or take the doctrine thus. Wherever there is ſin, there is the cauſe of much ſorrow and grief, it is the plain aſſertion of ſcripture, Rom. ii. 8, 9. *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil;* which one place, putting the four words together, ſays, 1. That there is ſorrow moſt certainly, and inſeparably on every ſoul that hath ſinned. And 2. That this ſorrow is exceeding great, (which may alſo be the reaſon why this ſorrow is ſet out in two words in the text) therefore four words are uſed by the apoſtle to expreſs it. It is not our purpoſe here to diſpute, whether God in his juſtice doth by neceſſity of nature puniſh the ſinner? Theſe three things conſidered, will make out the doctrine, which is, That there is a neceſſary connexion betwixt ſin and ſorrow, and that this ſorrow muſt needs be very great; 1. If we conſider the exceeding unſuitableneſs of ſin to the holy law of God, and how it is a direct contrariety to that moſt pure and perfect law. 2. If we conſider the perfectly holy nature of God himſelf, *The righteous Lord*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. xi. 7. *loveth righteouſneſs*; and the prophet, Hab. i. 13. ſays, *He is of purer eyes than he can behold evil, and he cannot look upon iniquity;* and tho' we need not to diſpute God's ſovereignty, yet it is clear that he is *angry with the wicked every day*, Pſal. vi. 11. and he *will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. xxxiv. 7. and that there is a greater ſuitableneſs in this inflicting ſorrow and grief on a ſinner that walks con-

trary to him, than there is in ſhewing him mercy; and there is a greater ſuitableneſs in his ſhewing mercy to an humbled ſinner, that is aiming to walk holily before him. 3. If we conſider the revealed will of God in the threatning, who hath ſaid, *The day that thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die.* We may ſay there is, as they ſpeak in the ſchools, a hypothetic neceſſity of grief and ſorrow to follow on ſin, and that there is a neceſſary connection betwixt them; and this may very well ſtand with the Mediator's coming in, and interpoſing to take that grief and ſorrow from us, and to lay it on himſelf; but it was once ours becauſe of our ſin.

If it be aſked what grief and ſorrow this is? We ſaid it is very great, and there is reaſon for it; for though our act of ſin, 1. As to the ſubject that ſins, man: And 2. As to the act of ſin itſelf, a ſinful thought, word, or deed that is ſoon gone, be *finite*; yet if we conſider ſin, 1. In reſpect of the object againſt whom, the infinite God. 2. In reſpect of the abſolute purity of God's law, a rule that bears out God's image ſet down by infinite wiſdom, and that may be ſome way called infinitely pure; and ſin, as being againſt this pure rule, that infinite wiſdom hath ſet down; and 3. If we conſider it in reſpect of its nature, every ſin being of this nature; that though it cannot properly wrong the majeſty of God, yet as to the intention of the thing, and even of the ſinner, it wrongs him; ſin in theſe reſpects may be called *infinite*, and the wrong done to the majeſty of God thereby, may be called infinite; as thoſe who built Babel, their intention in that work breathed forth infinite wrong to God, as having a direct tendency to bring them off from dependance on him; and ſo every ſin, if it had its will and intent, would put God in ſubordination to it, and ſet itſelf in his room; and therefore ſin, in ſome reſpect, as to the wrong againſt God, is infinite.

2. *Observe*, That the real and very great sorrow that the sins of the elect deserved, our Lord Jesus did really and actually bear and suffer; as we have expounded the words, and confirmed the exposition given of them, ye have a clear confirmation of the doctrine from them. 1. *Griefs* and *sorrows* in the plural number, shew intensness of sorrow and grief. 2. That they are called *ours*, it shews our propriety in them, and 3. That it is said Christ *bore* them; these concur to prove the doctrine, that the same sorrow which the sins of the elect deserved, Christ bore: It not only says, that our Lord bore sorrows, but the sorrows, that by the sins of the elect were due to them; and so there was a proportionableness betwixt the sorrows that he bare, and the sorrows they should have endured; he took up the cup of wrath that was filled for us, and that we would have been put to drink, and drank it out himself; suppose that our Lord had never died (as blessed be his name, there is no ground to make the supposition) the cup of sorrow that the elect would have drunken eternally, was the same cup that he drank out for them: It is true, we would distinguish betwixt these things that are *essentially* due to sin as the punishment of it, and these things that are only *accidentally* due to it; the former Christ bare, but not the latter. To clear both in a word or two, 1. These things essentially due to sin as necessarily in the threatning, *The day thou eatest thou shalt surely die;* and in the curse of the law according to that, 'Cursed is every one that abides not in all things 'that are written in the book of the law to do them,' are death and the curse, these are essentially the desert of sin; in which respect it was not only necessary that Christ should become man and suffer, but that he should suffer to death, or should die; and not only so, but that he should die the cursed death of the cross, as the threatning and curse put together hold out: And as to all those that he underwent, and met with

with before, and at his death, they were the accomplishment of the threatning due to us, and fulfilled in and by him in our room; so that as he himself saith, Luke xxiv. 6. 'O fools and slow of heart to believe 'all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ 'to have suffered these things, and to have entered 'into his glory?' Therefore he behoved to be in agony, and to sweat great drops of blood, to be crucified, and die, and to be laid in the grave. 2. The things which we call accidentally due to sin, are mainly two. 1. That horrible desperation of the damned in hell, where they gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme God. This we say is not properly and essentially the desert of sin, but only accidental. 1. In respect of the creatures inability to bear the wrath that sin deserveth; and hence ariseth not only a sinless horror which is natural, but a sinful desperation. 2. Add to this inability of the creature, the enmity thereof, whereby it cometh to thwart with and contradict the will of God; hence the desperation not only ariseth, but is increased: Now, our Lord Jesus not being simply a creature or a man, but God and man in one person, he was able to bear the sorrow and wrath due to the elect for their sin; and their being no quarrel, nor ground of any quarrel betwixt God and him, on his own account, though he had a sinless horror at the cup of his Father's displeasure, when put to his mouth; yet he had no sinful desperation. The second thing accidentally due to sin, is the eternal duration of the wrath or of the curse, because the sinner being a mere creature, cannot at one shock meet with the infinite wrath of God, and satisfy justice at once, therefore the Lord hath in his wisdom and justice found out a way of supporting the creature in its being, and continuing it for ever under wrath, because it cannot, being finite, satisfy infinite justice: But our Lord being God and man, being of infinite worth and value, and of infinite strength, was able to

satisfy justice, and bear at once, that which the elect could never have borne; yet he had the essentials of that which sin deserved, to wit, Death and the curse to meet with, and did actually meet with them, as the hiding of his Father's face, and the suspending and keeping back of the consolation, that by virtue of the personal union flowed from the God-head to the man-head: And he also had the actual sense and feeling of the wrath of God, the awakned sword of the justice of God actually smiting him; so that men wondered how he could be dead so soon. We shall only add a word or two of reasons for clearing and confirming the doctrine; and for proof of it, these three things concur, 1. That sins desert by God's appointment, is to have sorrow following it, 2. That by God's appointment according to the covenant of redemption, the Son of God undertook that same very debt that was due by the elect. And 3. That it was God's design not to pass one of their sins, without satisfaction made to justice, but to put at the surety for them all; for the declaration of the riches and glory of the free grace of God, when the sinner is delivered, and not put to pay: And for the declaration of the holy severity and justice of God, when not one farthing is owing, but the surety must needs pay it; and that both these meeting together, there may be to all generations a standing and shining evidence of the unsearchable riches both of God's grace and of his justice.

This is a sweet doctrine, and hath many massy, substantial, and soul-refreshing uses: Out of this eater cómes meat, and out of the strong comes sweat. This being the marrow of the gospel, holding forth, not only Christ's sufferings, but that he suffered not at random, or by guess, but that he suffered the sorrows and griefs that we should have suffered; and though the equivalent might have been received, yet he would needs undergo the same sufferings in their essentials; which may exceedingly confirm the faith and hope of believers

believers in him, of their exemption and freedom from the wrath and curſe of God, ſeeing he ſuffered the ſame that they ſhould have ſuffered, had not he interpoſed betwixt them and it, as their bondſman and ſurety.

Uſe 1. Hereby we may know what an evil and bitter thing ſin is, that have ſuch effects; would to God we could once prevail this far with you, as to make you conceive and believe, that ſin hath ſorrow and grief inſeparably knit to it, and that the ſinner is miſerable and liable to death, and to the curſe of God: And there is no difference but this, that ſinners are inſenſible how miſerable they are, and ſo in greater capacity to be made obnoxious to that miſery. Do ye mind this, O ſinners, *That God is angry with you every day?* That *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, is to every ſoul of man that does evil?* Tremble to think upon it; Many of you paſs as good people who will be found in this roll: And would ye know your condition, and the hazard that ye run? It is of wrath and the curſe of God eternally with deſperation and blaſphemy: And if that be miſery, ſin is miſery, or brings it. And the day comes when there ſhall be a ſtorm from heaven of fire and thunder, that will melt the elements above you, and not leave a ſtone upon a ſtone of theſe ſtately buildings on earth about you, in which day ſinners will be confirmed in the belief of this truth, *That it is an evil and bitter thing to depart from the living God.*

To preſs this *uſe* a little; there are two ſorts of ſinners, who if they would ſoberly let the truth of this doctrine ſink in their minds, they would ſee their folly. The firſt ſort are thoſe who lie quietly under by-paſt guilt unrepented of, as if the ſorrow were paſt, becauſe the act is ſo, but think not ſo, will the juſt God avenge ſin on his Son, and will he let it paſs in you? You that will grant ye are ſinners, and are under convictions of ſin, had need to take heed what follows it:

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As ye treasure up sin, ye are *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath:* O wrath is a heaping up in store for you! A second sort are these that go on in sin, whatever be said to the effects of it, and will confidently put their hand to it, as if there were no sting in it at all, and drink it down as so much sweet liquor; but these stolen drinks that seem sweet in secret, will be vomited up again with pain, torment and sorrow: And either it shall be grief and sorrow to you in the way of repentance, or eternal grief and sorrow, when the cup of God's wrath shall be put in your hand, and held to your head for evermore.

Use 2. By this we may see a necessity of making use of the Mediator Jesus Christ. It is God's great mercy that he hath given a Mediator, and that the Mediator is come, and that he hath taken on him our debt: What would our eternal perishing and wallowing in hell's torment with devils have been, to his sufferings? This doctrine therefore saith, that there is a necessity of making use of him, and receiving him; and therefore either resolve to meet with this sorrow in your own persons, or betake you to him, that by his interposing it may be kept off from you; weigh these two, that sorrow, death, and the curse necessarily follow sin: And that Jesus Christ hath died and undergone that curse for elect sinners, and then ye will see a necessity of being found in him, that ye may be free of the curse, which made Paul make that choice, Phil. iii. 8, 9. *I count all things dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him.* Oft-times the allurements of the gospel prevail not to bring sinners to Christ; but if its allurements do not prevail, will not the consideration of the vengeance of God persuade you? However in these two doctrines ye have in sum this, the curse of God following sin, and a free and full Saviour holden out to you, by whom ye may shun the curse, ye are invited to make him welcome: Choose you, death and life are set before you, whereby you are put to it, whether

whether ye will adventure to meet with the curse, or to make him welcome: Now God himself make you wise to make the right choice.

SERMON XX.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 4, 5.

Verse 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

IF we had the faith of that which the prophet speaks here, and the thorough conviction, who it is of whom he speaks, we would be in a holy transport of admiration and astonishment at the hearing of it; that it is he who is the Prince of life, that was bruised and wounded; and that these bruises, wounds and stripes are ours, were for us, and the price and satisfaction for our iniquities to divine justice: And yet that even he in the performing of all this, is reproached and despised by those, whose good he is thus pursuing and seeking after, oh how should it be wondered at!

These words, as we shewed, hold forth these three things. 1. The cause or end of Christ's suffering; *surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, which is to remove and take away the scandal that might arise from Christ's humiliation, described in the foregoing

foregoing words: He was low indeed, but there was no guile in his mouth; it was for no quarrel that God had at himself, but he undertook our debt, and therefore carried our sorrows. 2. The aggravation of mens enmity and desperate wickedness; that yet notwithstanding all this, *We esteemed him smitten of God, and afflicted.* 3. We have the exposition of the first part more clearly set down, *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities*, &c. Where more fully he expounds what in the beginning of the 4th verse he asserted.

We expounded the first part of the words, and shewed that these griefs and sorrows held forth the due desert of sin, called ours, because they are the due and particular desert of our sins, and that which they procured, and that Christ's bearing them, was not only meant of his taking away, or removing from us sorrows and griefs, as he did diseases; but of his real undergoing of that which we should have undergone, even such a bearing as made others think him smitten and plagued of God, and such as wounded and bruised him, even such as made him become a curse for us, and such as procured healing to us; all which proves that it was a real undergoing of sorrow and grief.

We spoke to two doctrines from this part, 1. That sin hath sorrow necessarily knit to it, and never wanteth sorrow following it. 2. That Christ Jesus undertook the same sorrows, and really bare these same griefs that sin procured to the elect, or that by sin were due to them.

That we may proceed to observe somewhat more, and for clearer access to the doctrine, we shall speak a word to a question that may be moved here.

What is meant by these words, *our*, *we*, and *us*? He hath born *our* griefs; the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of *us* all; by his stripes *we* are healed. And the rather I would speak to this, because throughout the chapter we find these *pronouns* very frequent.

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We know in ſcripture *our* and *us* are ſometimes extended to all mankind. So *we* are all loſt in Adam, and ſin hath a dominion over *us* all; and that part of the words, verſe 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray*, may well be extended to all mankind; ſometimes it is to be reſtricted to God's elect, and ſo *all* comprehends only ſuch and all ſuch: And in this reſpect *our*, *us* and *we*, and *all*, are contradiſtinguiſhed from many others in the world, and take not in all men, as Gal. iv. 26. *Jeruſalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all;* which is ſpoken in oppoſition to the bond-woman and her children ſpoken of before: So that this *our*, *us* and *we*, are not to be extended to all individual men in the world, as if Chriſt had ſatisfied the juſtice of God for all; but it is to be applied to God's elect, ſeparated in his purpoſe from others, and in God's deſign appointed to be redeemed and ſatisfied for by Chriſt: And the words being thus expounded, they lead us to this doctrine, that Jeſus Chriſt in bearing the puniſhment of ſin, had a particular and diſtinct reſpect to ſome definite ſinners. For confirmation of it, we ſhall not go out of the chapter, the ſcope whereof we would clear a little: And if we look through the chapter, we find five grounds to clear that theſe words are to be thus reſtricted.

For 1. We are to expound this univerſal with reſpect to God's purpoſe and covenant, the contrivance of the elects redemption, and to the death of Chriſt, the execution of it; and ſo theſe words, *our*, *us*, *we*, *all*, are and muſt be reſtricted to theſe, and in them we are to find out who they are: Now whoſe theſe are, we find clear, John vi. 37, 39. in the 37. ver. where he ſaith, *All that the Father hath given me ſhall come unto me*, and ver. 39. *This is the Father's will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing:* It is in a word thoſe whom the Father hath given to Chriſt, and as many as are given will believe. And certainly thoſe that are given to Chriſt to

be redeemed by him, are the ſame whoſe iniquities the Father makes to meet on him: And theſe are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe not given, John xvii. 6. 11. and are called *his ſheep*, John x. 15, and 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life*, to wit, for my ſheep. And all the ſtrain of this chapter being to ſhew God's way of contriving and proſecuting the work of redemption, and Chriſt's executing thereof, according to the covenant of redemption: All this ſpoken of Chriſt's ſuffering muſt be expounded according to that engagement. 2. Whereas it is ſaid, ver. 8. *For the tranſgreſſions of my people was he ſtricken;* it is certain, this *our* and *us* and *we*, for whom Chriſt was ſtricken, muſt be reſtricted to God's people; that is, his peculiar people, who are his by electing love as Chriſt ſaith, John xvii. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them to me:* They are not his, as all the world are his, but are contradiſtinguiſhed from the world as his own peculiar, purpoſed, deſigned people. Sure all the world are not God's people in this ſenſe, therefore they are called *his ſheep*, and contradiſtinguiſhed from thoſe who are not his ſheep, John x. 17. and therefore we are to look on theſe words, *our*, *us*, and *we*, as of equivalent extent with the peculiar people of God; he carried the puniſhment of the ſins of all God's people that are his peculiar election. 3. So ver. 10. 'When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering 'for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed:' Hence we gather this, that thoſe whoſe iniquities Chriſt bare, are Chriſt's ſeed, and for them he purpoſely laid down his life, as thoſe whom he expected ſhould be ſaved to ſatisfy him for the travel of his ſoul, and for no more; and theſe cannot certainly be all the world, there being ſuch contradiſtinction betwixt Chriſt myſtical, or his ſeed comprehending the elect, and the ſeed of the ſerpent comprehending the reprobate and wicked, who are ſaid to be of their father the devil: Thoſe are Chriſt's ſeed who are ſpiritually begotten of him; and theſe doubtleſs

doubtleſs are not all the world, and for theſe only he ſuffered; ſo that *our* ſins here, are the ſins of all the ſeed. 4. Look to ver. 11. where it is ſaid, 'By his 'knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many; 'for he ſhall bear their iniquities:' Where it is clear, whoſe ſins they are that Chriſt bears; it is theirs who are juſtified by his knowledge, or by faith in his blood; and juſtification by faith in his blood, and redemption by his blood, are commenſurable, and of equal extent. Now, it being certain as to the event, that not all the world, nor all in the viſible church, are juſtified by the faith of Chriſt; it muſt alſo be certain, that the ſins of others who are not, nor ſhall not be juſtified, were never purpoſely born by Chriſt. And this ground, as all the reſt, will be the more clear, if we conſider that it is given as an argument why they muſt be juſtified, becauſe he hath borne their iniquities. A *5th* Ground may be gathered from the laſt words of the chapter, 'He made interceſſion for the 'tranſgreſſors:' Whence we may reaſon, that Chriſt's interceſſion and his ſatisfaction are of equal extent, he ſatisfies for no more than he interceeds for: Now, it was not for all the world, nor indefinitely and by gueſs for all in the viſible church that Chriſt did interceed, *but for them that the Father had given him* out of the world, John xvii. ver. 9. and 6. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me*, and ver. 10. *All mine are thine, and thine are mine:* Chriſt's death being the ground of his interceſſion, and it being by virtue of his death that he interceeded, his death and interceſſion muſt be of the ſame extent: He interceeds for ſuch and ſuch ſinners, becauſe he hath payed a price for them, that there may be a good account made of them at the laſt day.

The 1. *uſe* of it ſerves to clear a great and precious truth concerning God's covenant, and diſcriminating love, whereby he hath put a difference betwixt ſome and others. 2. It ſerves to ſtir them up who are thus

differenced, to admire at, and to commend his love, who hath been graciously mindful of them, when others are past by. 3. It serves also to clear other scriptures, and this same chapter, and to teach us not to make common to all, the privileges bestowed on some peculiar ones; and to guard us against the vilifying and prophaning of our Lord's sufferings, as if he had no special and peculiar design in them, or as if they might be frustrated in the design of them, contrary to the promise made to him by the Father.

And therefore here to obviate an objection which is made from the 6 verse, *All we like sheep have gone astray:* Whence some would infer, that it is all, who like sheep have strayed, whose iniquities Christ hath born: We say, That that *all* is not intended to comprehend them whose iniquities Christ hath born only, but to hold out the extent of straying; or the meaning is not, to shew that his suffering and satisfying of justice, extended to all that strayed; but to shew that the elect for whom he suffered, had all of them strayed, as well as others: And this is like the reasoning which the apostle uses, 2 Cor. v. 14. *If one died for all, then were all dead;* the meaning whereof is not, that Christ died for all that were dead, but that all for whom Christ died were once dead; so here while it is said, *All we like sheep have gone astray*: It is to shew that the elect strayed, and esteemed him not as well as others, and had God's curse lying on them as their due, till Christ interposed and took it off them as well as others. The point might have also an use for confirmation, but we insist not on it.

2. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, that is *our* griefs and sorrows who are his elect, his people, his seed, who flee to him for refuge, and are justified by his knowledge, or by faith in him, and for whom he maketh intercession. Hence observe, that believers should endeavour to strengthen themselves in the faith of this, that Jesus Christ hath borne

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their griefs and sorrows, and hath satisfied justice for them in particular; they should study to be in case on good ground with the prophet, to say, *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows*, to make it sure that they are in the roll of elect believers, and justified persons: To say with the apostle Paul, Gal. iii. 13. *He was made a curse for us*: And with the same apostle, 2 Cor. v. ult. to say, *He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*: And to say with the apostle Peter, 1 Pet. i. 24. *Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree*: They speak always by way of application: So these places whereby we confirmed the doctrine, that Christ really bore that punishment of the sins of the elect, are expressed in an applicatory way: And that notable place, Gal. ii. 20. where, as if it were not enough to say, he loved us, and gave himself for us, he draws it nearer and more home, and saith, *Who loved me, and gave himself for me*. But that ye may not mistake the point, my meaning is not that every body should off hand make application of Christ's death: O! the presumption and desperate security that destroys thousands of souls here; as if there were no such distinction as we held forth in the first doctrine, nor any barr to be put in the way of that fancied universal application of Christ's dying for all sinners; whereas we shewed that it was for his sheep, and those given to him of the Father only, that he died, and for no more: But this is my meaning, that (as it is, 2 Pet. i. 10.) ye would *give diligence to make your calling and election sure*, and that in an orderly way ye would secure your interest in Christ's death; not to make this the first thing that ye apprehended for the foundation of your faith; that he died for you in particular; for that were to come to the top of the stairs, before ye begin to set foot on the first step: But the orderly way is to make sure your fleeing to Christ through the sense of sin, by your closing with him on his own terms,

terms, and your having the characters of his people ingraven on you: And then from such premises, ye may draw this conclusion as the result thereof, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows:* Then ye may be satisfiedly confirmed in this, that when Christ transacted and bargained with the Father about the elect, when he prayed, and took the cup of his Father's wrath and drank it out for them, he minded your names, and was made a curse in your room. The reason is drawn from the advantage of such a doctrine, as having in it the consolation of all the promises of God; for we can never comfortably apply, nor be delighted in the promises, till we come to make particular application of Christ's purpose and purchase in the work of redemption. This is it that rids marches, and draws a line betwixt us and reprobate men, and that keeps us from the fear of eternal death that pursues them: And it gives some ground of hope to lay hold on, and cleave to as to our enjoying of Christ's purchase. I know there is nothing that men had more need to be sober and wary in the search of, and in the securing themselves in, than this; yet by the same command that injoins us, to make our covenant-state, our calling and election sure, we are bound to make our redemption sure: And having at some length spoken of the way of making sure our believing, on the first verse we need insist the less on this, of making sure our redemption by Christ.

The 1 *use* serves for information, to let you know, that there are many professing Christians, that account this a curious, nice conceit, to study to be sure, and to make it sure, that Christ in his death and sufferings minded them in particular; others may think it impossible: And all may think it a very hard and difficult thing, and indeed so it is. But yet we would have you to consider, 1. That simply it is not impossible, else we should say, that the comfort of the people of God were impossible. 2. That it is no curious thing,

thing, for the Lord doth not lay the obligation to curiosity on any, though we could wish that many had a holy curiosity to know God's mind towards them, that they might not live in the dark about a business of such a concern. 3. That *the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Psal. xxv. 14. and even this same secret concerning redemption is with them, *and he will shew them his covenant:* And indeed it would be no small matter to have this manifested.

And therefore as a 2*d. use* of the point, we would commend to you the study of making this sure; for it hath many notable advantages attending it: It would provoke to humility, and to thankfulness to him *that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* It would give us a comfortable and chearful Christian life; it would warm the heart with love to God, and to Jesus Christ who hath thus loved us as to give himself for us. When we commend this to you, it is no uncouth, nice, needlesly curious, or unattainable thing, nor would we have you when ye cannot attain it, to sit down discouraged; neither would we have you take any extraordinary way to come by it; nor wait for any new light but that which is in the Bible; nor would we have you resolve to do no other thing till ye attain to this: But this we would have you to do, even to make faith in Christ sure, by fleeing to him, and casting your burden on him, by cordially receiving him, and acquiescing in him; and then ye make all sure: The committing of yourselves to him to be saved by his price payed to divine justice, and resting on him as he is held out in the gospel, is the way to read your interest in his redemption: And this is it that we have, Gal. iii. and ii. 19. where it is disputed at length, that we are heirs of Abraham by believing, and *by the law*, saith the apostle, *I am dead to the law, that I might live unto God: I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I live in the flesh*

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is by the faith of the Son of God: Hence he concludes, *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me:* And this he proves in the laſt words, *I do not fruſtrate the grace of God*, I do not diſappoint it; I mar it not in its end and deſign: It is (as if he had ſaid) ſeeking a loſt ſinner to ſave, and I give it a loſt ſinner to be ſaved: For though God's decree be the firſt ſtep to ſalvation, and the work of redemption follows on it, and then believing on both; yet to come to the knowledge of God's decree of election, and of our concern in the covenant of redemption, we look downward, and ſeek firſt to know, if we have a right to make application of that which was thought upon long ſince concerning us; and this we do by reflecting on the way we have come to believing: If we have been convinced and made ſenſible of ſin, and of our loſt condition by nature; if we have not ſmothered that conviction, but cheriſhed it; if we have not run to this or that duty, for ſatisfying divine juſtice, and for making our peace thereby; but were neceſſitated to betake ourſelves to Jeſus Chriſt, offered in the goſpel for the ſalvation of ſinners; and if we have cloſed with him as he was offered; and if we have done ſo, we may thence conclude that he hath loved *us*, and given himſelf to ſave *us:* Becauſe he hath humbled me for ſin (may the ſerious ſoul ſay) and given me this faith to believe in him; and this is his promiſe which I reſt upon, that I ſhall be ſaved. Or thou mayeſt try thy intereſt in his redemption thus; whether am I one of God's people or no? Whether do I walk like them? and ſo go through the marks and ſigns of holineſs, aſking thyſelf, What ſincerity is there in me? What mortification? What humility? meekneſs, love to God and his children? And what fruits of faith in new-obedience? Theſe two, faith and holineſs, are the pillars that bear up the houſe of aſſurance: Working and not reſting on it; believing and yet not growing vain and light becauſe of it, but ſo much the rather ſtudying holineſs:

holineſs: And to go on betwixt, and with theſe two, till we come to read God's mind about our election and redemption; for neither believing nor holineſs can make any alteration in the bargain of redemption, yet it will warrant our application of the bargain, and clear our intereſt in it: As the apoſtle Peter plainly inſinuates when he thus exhorts, *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.* How is that? Will diligence make God alter his decree of election, or make it any ſurer in itſelf? No, by no means, but it will aſſure us of it; for *by ſo doing an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto us abundantly into his everlaſting kingdom;* by giving all diligence to add one grace to another, there ſhall be a wide door opened for us to go into heaven. And there is no hazard in commending this doctrine to you all, even the ſtudy of faith and holineſs, thereby to come to the knowledge of God's ſecret council concerning you.

And therefore as a third *uſe* of this point, know that all of you that prejudge yourſelves of this comfort of your intereſt in Chriſt's purchaſe, do bring the blame of it on yourſelves. If any ſhall prophanely *object*, if God hath purpoſed ſo many ſhall get good of Chriſt's ſufferings, and more, what will my faith and holineſs do, if I be not elected? And how can my unbelief, and negligence prejudge me, if I be elected? We ſhewed in the former *uſe*, what faith and holineſs will do; and we tell you here, what your unbelief, and negligence will do, and it is this, it will ſeclude you from all the bleſſings of the covenant, and bring you under the ſentence of condemnation; for as the conditional promiſe looks to the believer and unbeliever; ſo it is not Chriſt's purchaſe, nor the difference God hath made in his purpoſe of election, that is the cauſe why ye are damned and not juſtified; but ye are damned becauſe ye tranſgreſſed God's law, and when ſalvation was offered to you thro' Chriſt, ye would not cloſe with the offer: And are ye not juſ-

tified, because ye betook not yourselves to him for righteousness, but continued in your sin, and in seeking righteousness by the law: For although this universal be not true, *That Christ died for all men*, yet this universal is true, that *they are all justified that by faith flee unto Jesus Christ for refuge.* Hence these two are put together, John ix. 37. *All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from heaven, not to do my will, but the Father's will that sent me.* If it should be asked, What is the Father's will? He answers, *This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing.* There are (are as if he had said) some committed to me to be redeemed by me, and I will lose none of them: And lest it should yet be objected, but I wot not, if I be given to Christ to be redeemed by him; he adds, *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life:* In which words, we have two wills, to say so, both having the same promise and effect; the first relates to the secret paction of redemption, ver. 36. And the second is his revealed will pointing at our duty, ver. 40. And so if any should say, I know not if I be given to Christ, I know not if I be elected; this answer is here given, What is that to thee? It is not to be searched into at the first hand, and broken in upon *per saltum*, and at the broad side; That is God's secret will; and that which is his revealed will belongs to thee, and that is, to see that thou believe, and if thou believest, the same promise that is annexed to believing is annexed to election, and they sweetly tryst together, and are of equal extent, to wit, believing and to be given to Christ: And therefore let me commend it to you, to hold you content with God's revealed will. For it is not the ground of your faith, I mean as to its closing with Christ, That of all given to Christ, he shall lose none; But this is the ground of

of it, That every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, shall have everlasting life: And we may add this word as one motive amongst others to faith and holiness, that by your studying of these ye may turn over the words of the prophet here to yourselves, and say, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows;* and that of the apostle, Gal. ii. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me;* also, that word of Peter cited before, *His ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree.* And O! what consolation is there!

The *4th* use of it is, To commend the practice of this to the believer that hath indeed fled to Jesus Christ; and to shew the great privilege that they have who are such: The practice of it is, that believers should seek to be established and confirmed in the particular application of Christ's death to themselves, not only to know that he suffered for the elect and for believers, but for them in particular, that, as it is Heb. iv. 16. *They may come with boldness to the throne of God*, and confidently assert their interest; and, as it is Heb. vi. they may grow up *to the full assurance of hope unto the end.* We suppose there are many believers that dare not disclaim the covenant, and their interest in Christ, who yet are fearful to make this particular application, *Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me;* but if they could knit the effects, with the cause from whence they came, they might attain to it; for the man that can say, I am fled to Christ for refuge, he may also say, that he purposely laid down his life to pay my debt; and he is warranted of Christ to make this application of his particular intention towards him: Upon the other side, the more consolation be in this to believers, it speaks the greater ground of terror to unbelievers, because of the prejudice they sustain by the want of this. And as many of you as make not faith and holiness your study, ye lie out of the reach of this consolation that flows from Christ's bearing the griefs and sorrows of his own:

And therefore let the profane, senseless multitude that know not what it is to die to the law, or to live to holiness, as ye would not commit sacrilege, stand back, and not dare to meddle with this redemption, till ye stoop and come in at this door of faith and holiness. And let as many as are in this way admit of the consolation; for it is the Lord's allowance upon you: But for others, if ye presume to take hold of it, the Lord will wring it from you, and let you know, to your cost, that ye had nothing to do with it.

SERMON XXI.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 4, 5.

Verse 4. *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

THESE words, and all this chapter, look liker a piece of the history of the gospel than a prophecy of the Old Testament; the sufferings of the Messiah being so directly pointed at in them. We shewed that this first part of the 4*th* verse holds forth the cause of his sufferings, and it is applied to our Lord, Matt. viii. 17. and 1 Pet. ii. 24. As for the second part of the verse in these words, *Yet we esteemed him smitten of God, stricken and afflicted;* those who are acquainted with

with the goſpel, cannot but know that it was fulfilled in him; and it is an aggravation of their ſin who did ſo undervalue and deſpiſe him, that though he condeſcended to come ſo low for us, yet we ſlighted him; and even then when the greateſt love was let out, we abuſed it, and made it the riſe of the greateſt malice: And for the *5th* verſe, it is applied by Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 24. This whole chapter then being ſo goſpel-like, and directly fulfilled in Chriſt, we may draw this general doctrine from it.

That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt who was born of the virgin Mary, ſuffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried, and roſe again the third day; is the very ſame Meſſiah that was propheſied of in the Old Teſtament, and was promiſed to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, whom the fathers before his coming in the fleſh were waiting for. And though this may be looked on as but a very common and uſeleſs doctrine, yet it is the main ground and foundation of our faith; we take many things for granted, wherein if we were well tried and put to it, we ſhould be found uncertain, and in this among the reſt. Now for confirmation of it, this ſame argument will make it out; we ſhall not purſue it at length, but in the proſecuting of it ſhall tie ourſelves to this chapter: The argument runneth thus, if in Chriſt Jeſus, that which was propheſied of the Meſſiah, and promiſed to the fathers, have its fulfilling and accompliſhment, then he muſt be the ſame Meſſiah that was propheſied of, and promiſed to them; for theſe things ſpoken of the one and only Meſſiah, can agree to no other: But whatever was propheſied and ſpoken or promiſed of the Meſſiah to the fathers, even to the leaſt circumſtance of it, was all fully accompliſhed and fulfilled in Chriſt; therefore the concluſion laid down in the doctrine follows, to wit, That our bleſſed Lord Jeſus is the ſame Meſſiah that was propheſied of and promiſed to the fathers, and whom before his coming they were looking for:

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So that that queſtion needs not now to be propoſed, 'Art thou *he* that ſhould come, or do we look for another?' 'Go,' ſays Chriſt, Mat. xi. 4, 5, 6. 'and tell John, the blind receive their ſight, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleanſed; the deaf hear, and the dead are raiſed, and the poor have the goſpel preached to them, and bleſſed is he whoſoever ſhall not be offended in me;' bleſſed is he, who becauſe of my humiliation is not ſtumbled. Now not to make a rehearſal of the general prophecies in ſcripture, all of which are exactly fulfilled in Chriſt, we ſhall only ſpeak to two things here for making out the argument propoſed. 1. That this chapter ſpeaks of the Meſſiah. 2. That what is ſpoken in it, is literally fulfilled in Chriſt.

1. That this chapter ſpeaks of the Meſſiah; tho' of old the blinded Jews granted it, yet now they ſay it ſpeaks of ſome other; but that it ſpeaks of him theſe things will make evident, 1. If we look to the 13th verſe of the former chapter, where it is ſaid, *My Servant ſhall deal prudently, he ſhall be exalted and extolled, and be very high;* there our Lord Jeſus is ſpoken of as the Father's Servant, or great Lord Deputy; and the Jews themſelves grant that this is meant of the Meſſiah; and there is nothing more clear than that what is ſpoken in this chapter relates to him, who is called *the Lord's Servant* in the former chapter, as we ſhewed before. 2. If we look to the deſcription of his perſon, it can agree to no other; for it is ſaid, *There was no guile found in his mouth, he was brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth*, &c. he had no ſin of his own, which can be ſaid of no other; therefore this chapter ſpeaks of him. 3. If we conſider the ends and effects of his ſufferings, they do alſo make it clear; the end of his ſufferings; for it is for the tranſgreſſions of his people, and as in Dan. vi. 27. *He was to be cut off, but not for himſelf;* the effects, *He ſhall*

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see his seed, and *by his knowledge justify many*. The New Testament is full to this purpose, there being no scripture in all the Old Testament more made use of, nor oftener applied to Christ than this.

2. What is spoken in this chapter is really and literally fulfilled in Christ, and we may briefly draw it to these *five* heads, all which we find clearly fulfilled in him. 1. To his sufferings. 2. To the ground of his sufferings. 3. To mens account and estimation of him. 4. To the promises made to him. 5. To the effects that followed his sufferings. *1st*, For his sufferings it is said, That he should be *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;* that he should be *despised and rejected of men*, and *not be esteemed;* that he should be looked on *as stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;* that he should *bear our sorrows and griefs*, and be *wounded for our transgressions;* that he should be *oppressed and afflicted*, and *brought as a lamb to the slaughter;* that he should be *numbered amongst the transgressors;* and, that he should die and be buried, *and make his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death:* all which are exactly fulfilled in him. And the clearing of his sufferings, whereof we spoke before, clears this, that not only he suffered, but that he was brought so low in suffering. *2dly*, For the ground of his sufferings, it is said to be for the sins of his own elect; *He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows;* he was wounded *for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; there was no guile found in his mouth*; the greatest enemies of our Lord could impute nothing to him; Pilate was forced to say, that he found no fault in him: All which shew that it was for the transgressions of his people that he suffered. *3dly*, As for mens little esteem of him, it is also very clear; for he was despised and rejected of men; we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not; the world thought little of him, and we that are elect thought but little of him. And what is more

more clear in the goſpel than this? where it is told, that he was reproached, buffetted, ſpit on, deſpiſed; they cryed, Away with him, crucify him; he truſted in God, let him deliver him; but God hath forſaken him. *4thly*, As for the promiſes made to him, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hands, he ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied, and by his knowledge ſhall many be juſtified, *&c.* What mean all theſe, but that he ſhall die, and riſe again, and have many converts, that God's work ſhall thrive well in his hand, and that he ſhall have a glorious kingdom, and many ſubjects? Which is called afterward his having a portion with the great, and his dividing of the ſpoil with the ſtrong: All this was accompliſhed in Chriſt, when after his reſurrection many were won and brought in by the goſpel to believe on him.

And tho' the Jews and Heathens concurred and conſpired to cut off all Chriſtians, yet his kingdom ſpread, and hath continued theſe ſixteen hundred years and above. *5thly*, As for the effects that followed his ſufferings, or the influence they had on the elect people of God; as many converts as have been and are in the world, as many witneſſes are there, that he is the Meſſiah; every converted, pardoned, and reconciled ſoul ſeals this truth. Hence 1 John v. 7, 8. it is ſaid, *There are three that bear witneſs in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe Three are one; and there are three that bear witneſs on earth, the Spirit* in his efficacy, *the Water*, in the ſanctifying virtue of it, in changing and cleanſing his people, and *the Blood* in the ſatisfying and juſtifying virtue of it; and theſe Three agree and concur in one, even this one, to wit, That Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God; and then it follows, he that believeth hath the witneſs in himſelf, becauſe he hath gotten pardon thro' him, and therefore can ſet his ſeal to this truth, and ſay, truly Chriſt is the Meſſiah. The

The *use* is, To exhort you to acquaint yourselves with these things that serve to confirm this truth; the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistle to the Hebrews are much upon it, to hold out, and to prove Christ Jesus to be the true Messiah, and Saviour of his people. If this be not made sure and certain, we have no firm ground for our faith; and tho' it be sure in itself, yet so long as it is not so to us, we want the consolation of it; and there is a two-fold prejudice that comes through our want of thorough clearness in, and assurance of this truth. 1. To the generality of hearers, there is this prejudice, that they are so careless and little solicitous to rest on him. And as it made the Jews to reject him, who to this day stumble at him on this same very ground, that they know him not to be the Messiah, the Christ of God, in whom is accomplished all that was spoken of the Messiah; so Christians not being thoroughly versed in it, they do not rest on him, nor close with him as the true Messiah. 2. There is a prejudice also from it to believers, who have only a glimmering light of Christ's being the Messiah, they come short of that consolation they might have, if they were fixed in the faith of it: There is this great evil among Christians, that they study not to be solidly clear and thoroughly versed in this point; so that if they were put to reason and debate with a Jew, if there were not a witness within themselves of it, the faith of many would be exceedingly shaken.

2. From this, that the prophet never speaks of Christ's sufferings, but he makes application of them; he carried *our* griefs, he was wounded for *our* transgressions, *&c.* *Observe*, That believers should look on Christ's sufferings as undergone for them, and in their room and place: We cleared before, 1. That Christ suffered for some peculiarly, and not for all; and 2. That believers should endeavour the clearing of their own interest in his sufferings, and that they

have a right to them: Now we briefly add this 3*d* akin to the former; that believers, and ſuch as are fled to Chriſt for refuge, ſhould look on his ſufferings as undergone for them; and the ſame ſcriptures which we cited to confirm theſe, will confirm this: The reaſon why we would have you confirmed in this, is, becauſe, 1. It is this only that will make you ſuitably thankful, it is this which is a notable ground of that ſong of praiſe, Rev. i. 4. *To him that hath loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*, &c. 2. This is a ground of true, ſolid and ſtrong conſolation, even to be comforted in the applicatory faith of Chriſt's purchaſe. 3. It is the Lord's allowance to his people, which they ſhould reverently and thankfully make uſe of, even to look on Jeſus Chriſt, as wounded, pierced, and lifted up on the croſs for them; and by doing this according to his allowance, there is way made for application of all the benefits of his purchaſe.

3. From the ſcope (looking on the words as ſpoken to remove the ſcandal of the croſs) obſerve (which may be a reaſon of the former) that men will never conceive of Chriſt rightly in his ſufferings, except they take him as ſuffering for them, and in their room: This looking on Chriſt, leads 1. To conceive highly of the glory of his grace, and condeſcending love to ſinners. 2. It leads to Chriſt's faithfulneſs, who came to the world on our errand, according to the ancient tranſaction in the covenant of redemption, as he is brought in, ſaying, Pſal. lx. *Lo, I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God.* 3. It leads to a fixed belief of God's holineſs, juſtice and goodneſs, in exacting ſatisfaction of his own Son, and in accepting that ſatisfaction. 4. It gives a right view of the way of grace, and lets us ſee it to be a moſt real thing: God the offended party accepting of the price, and Chriſt paying it. Thus the believer's faith gets a ſight of Chriſt ſatisfying, as if he ſaw his own debt ſatisfied by himſelf;

ſelf; it ſees him undergoing the curſe, and juſtice inflicting it on him, that the believer may go free.

The *uſe* is, To ſhew the neceſſity of ſtudying the well grounded application of Chriſt's ſufferings for us; much of the reaſon why Chriſt is not more prized lies here, that he is not looked on as paying our debt; otherwiſe when challenges of the law and of juſtice take hold on the ſoul, if Chriſt were ſeen interpoſing, and ſaying, *A body haſt thou prepared unto me:* And if juſtice were ſeen exacting, Chriſt performing, and God accepting his ſatisfaction, and that in ſign and token that juſtice is ſatisfied, he is raiſed from the dead, juſtified in the Spirit, and is entered in poſſeſſion of glory as the believers fore-runner in their name: It would afford precious and lovely thoughts of Jeſus Chriſt, and humbling thoughts of ourſelves: Therefore there is a neceſſity, if we would conſider his ſufferings aright, and prize and eſteem him, that we endeavour to make particular application of them to ourſelves on good grounds. 2. Upon the other hand know, ye who have no ground to make this application, that ye cannot eſteem aright of him or his ſufferings, nor of the grace that ſhined in them, becauſe ye have no title to, nor can, while ſuch, have any clearneſs of intereſt in them. 3. For you that would fain have a high eſteem of Chriſt, and yet are all your days caſting at this foundation, never think nor expect to win rightly to eſteem of him, ſo long as ye ſcar to make application of his purchaſe; and therefore that ye may love and praiſe him and eſteem rightly of him, labour to come up to the making of this application on ſolid and approved grounds.

4. More particularly from this part of the aggravation, *Yet we eſteemed him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted:* We have a fourfold confirmation of truth, or four precious truths confirmed. 1. That our Lord Jeſus in his ſufferings did really ſuffer, and was really brought low in his ſufferings, ſo as on-lookers thought

him a moſt deſpicable man, and one that was ſtricken and ſmitten of God, and afflicted: Of this we ſpoke on the beginning of the *4th* verſe. 2. We have here an evidence of the exceeding great freeneſs of grace, and of the love of Chriſt in his ſufferings, in ſo far as he bare their ſorrows, and payed their debt that counted him ſmitten: There was no good thing in us to deſerve or procure his ſufferings, but moſt freely he underwent theſe ſufferings, and undertook our debt, Rom. v. 8. 'God commends his love towards us; in 'that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us:' and verſe 10. 'While we were yet enemies, we were 'reconciled by the death of his Son:' Can there be a greater proof of infinite and free love than appears in our Lord's ſufferings? There was not only no merit on our ſide; but on the contrary, deſpiſing, rejecting, being aſhamed of him, reproaching him, kicking againſt him, and rubbing of affronts on him; Paul and others having their hands hot in his blood.

Uſe 1. Conſider here, behold and wonder at the free love of God, and rich condeſcending love of Chriſt; he ſtands not at the bar and prays for them that were praying him to pray for them: But as it is in the end of the chapter, it was for tranſgreſſors; it was even for ſome of them that were ſeeking to take away the life of the Prince of life, and for other tranſgreſſors.

2. Know that in them to whom the benefit of Chriſt's death is applied, there is no more worth than there is in others who do not ſhare of the benefit of it: It is the opinion not only of hereticks, but ſome way of many ignorant profeſſors, that thoſe for whom Chriſt died, are better than others: But here we ſee a proof of the contrary; he dies for them that accounted him ſmitten of God: And this he doth for two reaſons, 1. To ſhew the riches and freedom of his grace, that could overcome man's evil and malice, and outreach the height of the deſperate wickedneſs that

that is in man, and ſtands not (to ſpeak ſo) on ſtepping ſtones, but comes over the greateſt guilt of ſin and enmity in the creature. 2. To comfort and encourage his followers when engaged to him, againſt and out over their groſſeſt failings and greateſt miſcarriages; he that loved them when they were deſpiſing and rejecting him, and ſpitting in a manner in his very face: Will he now give up with them when they have ſome love to him, for this or that corruption that ſtirreth or breaketh forth in them? Thus the apoſtle reaſons, Rom. v. 10. *If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we ſhall be ſaved by his life:* We were enemies when Chriſt gave himſelf for us, but through grace we are ſomewhat better now; enmity and deſpite in us was then at an height, now it is weakened, reſtrained, and in ſome meaſure mortified: And if while we were at the height of enmity againſt him, he died for us to reconcile us to God; how much more now being reconciled, may we expect peace and ſafety, and all the benefits of his purchaſe through him: Thus there is a notable conſolation, from his bent of malice that was ſometime in us, compared with the victory that grace hath now gotten over it; and the gradation is always comfortable, to wit, that thoſe luſts that once did reign, and were without any gracious oppoſition made to them or any proteſtation entered againſt them, prevailing it may be publicly, are now oppoſed and proteſted againſt: And if Chriſt ſtood not on the greater, will he ſtand on the leſſer? And our Lord allows this ſort of reaſoning ſo much the more, that he may thereby ſtrongly engage the heart of the believer againſt ſin, and to the admiring of grace, withal to the ſerious ſtudy of holineſs.

3. It ſerves to let you know how much ye believers are engaged and obliged to grace, and what thanks ye owe to it. 1. Look to what ſatisfies for your debt, ye pay not one farthing of it, our Lord Jeſus payed all.

2. Look

2. Look to the moving cauſe, it is to be attributed to nothing in you, but altogether to free grace: Some poor dyver may by his pleading prevail with an able and pitiful hearted man to pay his debt: But there was no ſuch externally moving cauſe in you to procure this of him, but he freely and willingly, and with delight payed our debt when ye were in the height of malicious oppoſition to him, doing all that might ſcar him from it: And had it been poſſible that man's malice, deſpiſing and deſpite could have ſcarred him, he had never died for one ſinner; but he triumphed openly in his grace over that, and all that ſtood in his way.

4. We have here a confirmation of that truth that holds out man's malice and deſperate wickedneſs; And can there be any thing that evidenceth man's wickedneſs and malice more? Than 1. To have enmity againſt Chriſt, 2. To have it at ſuch an height as to deſpiſe him, and count him ſmitten and plagued of God. And 3. To be at the height of malice even then when he out of love was condeſcending ſo low as as to ſuffer and ſatisfie juſtice for him; ye may poſſibly think that it was not ye that had ſuch malice at Chriſt; But ſaith not the prophet, *We eſteemed him ſmitten of God?* Taking in himſelf and all the elect, which might give us this obſervation, That there is nothing more deſperately wicked, and filled with more enmity againſt Chriſt in his condeſcending love, and againſt God in the manifeſtation of his grace, than when even elect ſouls for whom he hath ſuffered, deſpiſe him, and count him ſmitten of God and afflicted: It is indeed very ſad, yet very profitable, to walk under the deep apprehenſion, and ſoul-preſſure of heart-enmity againſt God and Chriſt. Are there any of you that think ye have ſuch ſinful and wicked natures that diſpoſe you to think little of Chriſt, to deſpiſe and reject him and his grace? God's elect have this enmity in their natures: And if ſuch natures be in

in the elect, what must be in the reprobate who live and die in this enmity? If this were seriously considered and laid to heart, O but people would be humble, nothing would affect the soul more, and sound to the very heart, than to think that Christ suffered for me, through grace an elect and a believer; and that yet notwithstanding I should have so despised and rejected him, and accounted him smitten of God and afflicted: Let me exhort all of you to look back on your former walk, and to lay this enmity to heart, for the day is coming when it will be found to be a biting and conscience-gnawing-sin to many. 4. In that he aggravates their enmity from this. Observe this truth which is also here confirmed, that there is nothing that gives sin a deeper dye, than that it is against grace and condescending love, that is, against Christ when suffering for us, and offered to us: O! That makes sin to be exceeding sinful, and wonderfully abominable; and thus it is aggravated, Heb. ii. as greater than the contempt of Moses his law: And Heb. vi. It is accounted to be a *crucifying the Son of God afresh*, and a *putting him to an open shame*; and Heb. x. It is called a *treading him under foot;* an *accounting the blood of the covenant to be an unholy thing*, and a doing despite to the spirit of grace: These two last scriptures look mainly to the sin against the Holy Ghost; yet so as there is somewhat of that which is said in them to be found in all unbelievers, for despising of Christ: It is a sin someway hateful, even to the publicans and sinners to hate them that love us, to do ill to them that do good to us; how much more sinful and hateful is it to despise and hate him who loved us, so as to give himself for us, and when he was giving himself for us? There are many sins against the law that will draw deep, but this will draw deeper than all, even sinning against grace, and the Mediator interposing for sinners, and manifesting love to them: And the reckoning will run thus; Christ was manifested to you

you in this gospel as the only remedy of sin, and set forth as crucified before your eyes, and offered to you in the gospel, and yet ye despised him, and esteemed him not: And let me say it to believers, that it is the greatest aggravation of their sin: It is true, in some respect, that the sins of believers are not so great as the sins of others, they not being committed with such deliberation and full bent of the will, nor from the dominion of sin; yet in this respect they are greater than the sins of others, because committed against special grace and love actually communicated; and therefore when the believer considers, that he hath requited Christ thus, it will affect him most of any thing, if he has any suitable tenderness of frame.

5. From considering that it is the prophet who expresses this aggravation, we may observe, that the believer who is most tender, and hath best right to Jesus Christ and his satisfaction, and may upon best ground apply it, will be most sensible of his enmity, and of the abominable guilt there is in despising and wronging of Jesus Christ; therefore the prophet brings in himself as one of those that by Christ's stripes were healed, owning his guilt, *we despised* and rejected him, *we* esteemed him not, *we* judged him smitten of God: The reason is, because interest in Jesus Christ makes the heart tender; and any wrong that is done to him to affect us the sooner and the more deeply, the scurf that sometime was on the heart being in a measure taken away; an interest in Christ awakeneth and raiseth an esteem of him, and produceth a holy sympathy with him in all the concerns of his glory, even as the members of the body have a fellow-feeling with the head: Make a supposition that a man in his madness should smite and wound his head, or wrong his wife, his father, or his brother; when that fit of madness is over, he is more affected with that wrong than if it had been done to any other member of his body, or to other persons not at all,

or

or not ſo nearly related to him: There is ſomething of this pointed at, Zech. xii. 10. *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as a man doth for his only ſon:* As if he had ſaid, the ſtrokes they have given the head ſhall then be very heavy and grievous to be borne, and will be made to their feeling to be afreſh; they thought not much of theſe woundings and piercings of him before, but ſo ſoon as their intereſt in him is clear, or they come cordially to believe in him, they are ſincerely affected with the wrongs done to him.

The *uſe* is, That it is a mark, to try if there be indeed an intereſt in Chriſt, and if it be clear: The man whoſe intereſt is cleareſt, 1. His wrongs done to Chriſt will prick him moſt, if the wrongs be done by others they affect him; if by himſelf, they ſomeway make him to faint: Hardneſs of heart under wronging of Chriſt, is too great an evidence that there is little or no ground for application of his ſatisfaction, but it is otherwiſe, when wrongs done to Chriſt affect us moſt. 2. When not only challenges for ſin againſt the law, but for ſins againſt Chriſt and grace offered in the goſpel, do become a burden, and the greateſt burden. 3. When the man is made ſenſible of ſecret enmity at Chriſt, and is diſpoſed to muſter up aggravations of his ſinfulneſs on that account, and cannot get himſelf made vile enough; when he hath an holy indignation at himſelf, and with Paul counts himſelf the *chief of ſinners:* Even though the evil was done in ignorance, much more if it hath been againſt knowledge: It is no bad ſign when ſouls are brought to heap up aggravations of their guilt for wrongs done to Chriſt; and when they cannot get ſuitable expreſſions ſufficiently to hold it forth, as it is a bad ſign to be ſoon ſatisfied in this: There are many that will take with no challenge for their wronging Chriſt, but behold here how the prophet inſiſts, both in the words before, in theſe, and in the following words; and he

can no more get off the thoughts of it, than he can get off the thoughts of Christ's sufferings.

6. While the prophet saith, when Christ was suffering for his own, and for the rest of his peoples sins, *We esteemed him not*, but judged him *smitten of God*; observe briefly, because we hasten to a close, that Jesus Christ is often exceedingly mistaken by men in his most glorious and gracious works; can there be a greater mistake than this? Christ suffering for our sins, and yet judged smitten and plagued of God by us, or which is more even Christ Jesus is often shamefully mistaken in the work of his grace, and in the venting of his love towards them whose good he is procuring, and whose iniquities he is bearing.

The *use* of it serves, 1. To teach us when we are ready to pass censure on Christ's work, to stand still, to animadvert on, and to correct ourselves, lest we construct unsuitably of him: He is much wronged as to his public work; as if he were cruel, when indeed he is merciful; as if he had forgotten us, when indeed he remembers us still: And as to his private work in particular persons, as if he did fail in his promise when he is most faithful, and bringing it about in his own way. And 2. (which is of affinity to the former) it is a warning to us, not to take up hard constructions of Christ, nor to misconstrue his work, which when misconstrued, himself is mistaken and misconstrued. How many think that he is breaking when he is binding up, that he is wounding when he is healing, that he is destroying when he is humbling? Therefore we should suspend passing censure till he come to the end and close of his work, and not judge of it by halves; and then we shall see there was no such ground for misconstruing him, who is every day holding on in his own way, and steadily pursuing the same end that he did from the beginning; and let him be doing so. To him be praise for ever.

SER-

SERMON XXII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 5.

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

IT is hard to say whether the subject of this verse, and almost of this whole chapter, be more sad or more sweet; it is indeed a sad subject to read and hear of the great sufferings of our blessed Lord Jesus, and of the despightful usage that he met with, and to see such a flood of malice spued and spit out on that glorious faith: So that when he is bearing our griefs, and carrying our sorrows, we do even then account him plagued, smitten of God, and afflicted, and in a manner look upon it as well-deserved: Yet it is a most sweet subject, if we either consider the love it comes from, or the comfortable effects that follow it; that hath been the rise, the cause, and the occasion of much singing to man, here below, and is the cause and occasion of so much singing among the redeemed that are this day before the throne of God; and as the grace of God hath overcome the malice of men, so we are persuaded this cause of rejoicing hath a sweetness in it beyond the sadness, though often we mar our own spiritual mirth, and know not how to dance when he pipes unto us.

These words are an explication of the *4th* verse, where it is asserted that Christ's sufferings were not for himself but for us, from, and by which the prophet having aggravated mens malice, who notwith-

ſtanding eſteemed him not, yea judged him ſmitten of God, he comes again for furthering and carrying on this ſcope, to ſhew more particularly the ground, end, and effects of Chriſt's ſufferings; where ye ſhould remember what we hinted before in general, that men will never think nor conceive of Chriſt's ſufferings rightly, till they conceive and take him as ſuffering for them; and when we conſider this, we think it no wonder, that the moſt part eſteem but little of the ſufferings of Chriſt, becauſe there are but few that take him under this notion, as ſtanding in their room, and paying their debt, and as being put in priſon for them when they are let free.

In this *5th* verſe, we have theſe three, 1. A further expreſſion of Chriſt's ſufferings. 2. The cauſe of them, or the end that he had before him in them. 3. The benefits and fruits or effects of them.

There are in the words four expreſſions which I ſhall clear, 1. *He was wounded*, to ſhew the reality that was in his ſufferings, he was actually pierced, or as the word is rendered in the margin, *tormented*, and the cauſe is *our tranſgreſſions;* and while it is ſaid, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, he means, 1. That our tranſgreſſions procured his wounding. And 2. That his wounding was to remove them, and to procure pardon to us. 2. *He was bruiſed*, that is, preſſed as grapes in a wine-preſs, he underwent ſuch a wounding as bruiſed him; to ſhew the great guilt of ſin, and the heavineſs of wrath that would have come on us for it, had not he interpoſed: And the cauſe is *our iniquities;* and thoſe two words *tranſgreſſions* and *iniquities* ſhew the exceeding abominableneſs of ſin; *tranſgreſſions* or errings pointing at our common ſins, *iniquities* or rebellions pointing at greater guilt. 3. *The chaſtiſement*, or as the words will bear, the diſcipline *of our peace was upon him;* it ſuppoſes firſt, That we by nature were at enmity with, and enemies to God. Secondly, That before our peace could

could be procured, there behoved to be a satisfaction given to justice, the Mediator behoved to come under discipline and chastisement. 4. *And by his stripes we are healed;* he was so whipped, that the marks of the rod remained behind; the first benefit looks to pardon of sin, and peace with God in the first three expressions; the second in this last expression, looks to our sanctification and purging from the dominion and pollution of sin; by Christ's becoming sin for us, there is a way made to wash us from all the guilt of sin, and from all the foul spots and stains that were on us by sin, and he hath thus procured holiness to us; we come easily by it, but it cost Christ dear, yea, very dear.

These very sad, but most sweet, and soul-comforting words, hold out a short sum of the substance and marrow of the gospel; and because they do so, we shall speak of them summarily together; and ye should the more seriously attend, especially such as are more ignorant, that by the reading and opening up of this verse ye may be brought and kept in mind of the sum of the gospel; and to make the matter the more clear, I shall endeavour to make the doctrines drawn from it, as so many answers to six or seven questions. As 1. What is man's condition naturally, and what is the condition of all them that get no benefit by Christ's death? 2. How is man redeemed and freed from that condition; 3. By whom is he freed, or who makes the satisfaction? 4. How doth he perform that satisfaction? 5. What are the benefits that flow from, and come to us by the satisfaction performed? 6. Who are the persons for whom Christ hath performed the satisfaction, and to whom he hath procured these benefits? 7. What is the way how these benefits are transferred or derived to those persons? And putting these seven together, we may have a short catechism in one verse.

1. Then what is man's condition by nature? 1*st*,

He

He is under tranſgreſſions. 2*dly*, Under iniquities. 3*dly*, At enmity with God. And 4*thly*, Under wounds and loathſome diſeaſes of a ſinful nature: In a word, man by nature is a ſinner, guilty, greatly guilty, under God's wrath and curſe; and at enmity with God, of a moſt ſinful and abominable nature, even ſick with, and loathſome, becauſe of ſin. The firſt is implied in this word, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, that is our common ſins; the ſecond is holden out in the next word, *He was bruiſed for our iniquities*, or rebellions, which holds out great guilt; the third in that word, *The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him*, which ſuppoſes that we were once without peace with God; the laſt word, *By his ſtripes we are healed*, ſuppoſeth, that we continue in that condition filthy and polluted, and polluting ourſelves more and more, greedy to drink in ſin, and wounding and ſickning ourſelves by ſin. Now lay theſe four words together, they clear this truth to our judgment, and ſerve to point out to us the neceſſity of a Mediator. Again, conſider them in a ſecond notion, and they tell us, that even the elect themſelves, are by nature in the ſame ſinful and rebellious condition with others, at enmity with, and under the curſe of God, and abominably polluted before they be waſhed and healed, as the apoſtle aſſerts, Epheſ. ii. *We are by nature children of wrath even as others;* and here it is plainly declared, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities*, &c. Some are ready to think (as was hinted before) that the elect by nature were better than others, or that God foreſaw they would be better than others, and therefore he elected them. This piece of Arminianiſm is in all naturally; but this text in down-right contradiction to ſuch a groundleſs conceit, anſwers and aſſerts that by nature they are even like others, as the apoſtle ſaith, Rom. xi. 32. *God hath concluded them all under unbelief, that he might have mercy on all.* All the elect as well as others,

thers, are concluded under sin and wrath, that the way of obtaining any spiritual good, might be by mercy and free-grace alone.

2. How are men freed from this sinful and miserable condition? *Answer*, 1. In general before the quarrel can be taken away, and their peace can be made, there must be satisfaction, which is implied in these words, *The chastisement of our peace was upon him;* which supposes the necessity of a satisfaction made or to be made, in respect of God's decree and commination, who said, *The day thou sinnest, thou shalt die*, and *cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the law to do them.* 2. And more particularly, there must be a satisfaction; because there is 1*st*, The justice of God that hath a claim by a standing law. 2*dly*, The holiness of God that must be vindicated. And 3*dly*, The faithfulness of God that must be performed and come to pass what it hath pledged itself for, as well in reference to the threatning as to the promise; for those words, *Hath he said, and will he not do it?* relate to the one as well as the other; there is a great mistake in many, while they leap immediately to mercy, without minding the necessity of a satisfaction to provoked justice, and on this ground that God is merciful; which, if it were an argument good enough, it would say, that all, even the reprobate may get mercy; but we should consider the way that God hath laid down for sinners coming to mercy, and how that before peace can be made, he will needs have satisfaction to his justice.

3. Who maketh the satisfaction? The text says, it is *he* and *him; he* was wounded for our transgressions, the chastisement of our peace was on *him;* and who is this *he* and *him?* It is in general the Messiah, who was then to come, he who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, who suffered and was crucified, who died and was buried, and rose the third day; even he, who having the nature of God

God and our nature united in one person, *He his own-self bare our sins in his body on the tree*, as is said, 1 Pet. ii. 24. and *he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* as it is, 2 Cor. v. ult. even he of whom the apostle hath been speaking here, while he says, *We, as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled unto God:* And when we say it is Christ that is meant, we are to understand it as well negatively and exclusively, excluding all others, as positively including him; when we make him to be the only Saviour, we exclude all that men can do, with their penance, prayers, good works, and all that angels can do; neither man nor angel could satisfy divine justice, and make our peace with God; and therefore it is said, Acts iv. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus*, where it is clear that all others are excluded, as it is, Psal. xl. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not*, &c. neither penance, performances, nor any other thing will do it; but it is said, *Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book, it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.* Take this then as another ground of saving knowledge, that it is our blessed Lord Jesus that satisfies justice, even he who being God, was content to become man, and is God and man in one person; he, and he only undertaking the debt, satisfies justice.

4. How does he satisfy justice? *Answ. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed:* In which words observe these three things, 1. In Christ's satisfaction for us there is an actual undertaking, he becomes surety, and enters himself in our room; when all other things are rejected, angels, men with their sacrifices, thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oyl, and the fruit

fruit of the body, then our Lord Jesus comes in and undertakes, Psal. xl. 7. *Lo, I come*, he satisfies for our transgressions; which supposes that justice could not have demanded our debt of him if he had not undertaken it; therefore Heb. vii. 24. he is called the *surety of a better testament;* for he comes in our room and place, and undertakes to pay our debt; even as if a man under debt were going to prison, and another able, rich man should undertake to pay the debt, although the debt should lie by for a while unpayed, yet the creditor will get a decree on the surety for payment of the debt when he pleases to sue him; so Jesus Christ enters as bondsman for our debt, and becomes liable to the payment of it. 2. Christ's performance and payment of the debt according to his undertaking, implies a covenant and transaction on which the application is founded, which we shewed was also implied in the foregoing words, verse 4. *He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.* God the Father, Son, and holy Spirit, are the party wronged by sin. Jesus Christ considered personally and as Mediator, is the party undertaking: The terms are, That he shall suffer, and satisfy justice for us, and that we shall go free, that his paying shall be our freedom, that the debt which he pays for us shall not be exacted of us in person, 2 Cor. v. ult. *He who knew no sin, was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* and here, *the chastisement of our peace was on him;* it was transferred from us to him, *that by his stripes we might be healed;* by his stripes and wounds health was procured to us. 3. Our Lord Jesus in fulfilling the bargain, and satisfying justice, payed a dear price; it was at a very dear rate that he bought our freedom; he was wounded, bruised, suffered stripes and punishment: So that ye may take the answer to the question in sum to be this, our Lord Jesus performed and satisfied for all that was due by us, by undertaking our debt, and paying a

dear price for ſinners, according to the covenant of redemption; he came under the law, and the law ſtruck at him as ſurety, and he anſwered its demands, and fully and condignly ſatisfied the juſtice of God for us.

As for that queſtion, Whether Chriſt might not by one drop of his blood have ſatisfied? and ſuch like, we think them very needleſs, too curious, and little or not at all edifying; but if it be aſked, Why Chriſt paid ſo much? we anſwer, 1. It behoved Chriſt to pay a condign ſatisfaction to juſtice. 2. It was meet that he ſhould pay all that he paid. *Firſt*, We ſay, it behoved to be a condign ſatisfaction: For 1*ſt*, It behoved to be a price equivalent to all that the elect ſhould have ſuffered, had not he interpoſed. 2*dly*, It behoved to be proportionable to the juſtice of God; for God having laid down ſuch a way of ſhewing mercy, that his juſtice ſhould be ſalved, there behoved to be condign ſatisfaction for the vindication of juſtice; which was done by Chriſt's ſuffering to the full undoubtedly; if we conſider, 1. The excellency of the perſon that ſuffered, God and man in one perſon. 2. If we conſider the nature of his ſufferings, that they were exceeding great, heavy, and preſſing. And 3. If withal we conſider the manner of his ſufferings, that it was with much readineſs and chearfulneſs of obedience to the Father's will: That ſuch and ſo excellent a perſon ſhould ſuffer, and ſuffer ſo much, and ſuffer in ſuch a way; this ſure makes condign ſatisfaction, and ſo juſtice is thereby fully ſatisfied, and made as glorious as if all the elect had ſuffered eternally: Therefore we ſay, that his ſufferings were a condign and proportionable ſatisfaction to juſtice for them whoſe debt he payed, by this juſtice is completely and gloriouſly ſatisfied. *Secondly*, We ſaid that it was meet that he ſhould pay all that he payed, and ſo it is, if we conſider, 1. The excellency of immortal ſouls, a little price (as all that men or angels could

could have payed would have been the fineſt gold, ſilver, or precious ſtones) could not have done it, *The redemption of the ſoul is precious, and ceaſeth for ever*, to wit, amongſt all the creatures, Pſal. xiix. 8. 2. The ſeverity of juſtice on the juſt account of ſin, called for ſuch a price. 3. God's end, which was to make both his grace and juſtice glorious, required, and made it meet that our Lord ſhould ſuffer condignly, and in his ſufferings ſuffer much, even all that he did ſuffer; and in this ye have an anſwer to this queſtion, why Chriſt ſuffered ſo much as the loſs (to ſpeak ſo) of his declarative glory for a time, outward ſufferings and inward ſufferings, even the bruiſing and ſqueezing that his ſoul was under, which made him to ſay, that *it was heavy unto death, and exceeding ſorrowful.* Let not ſinners then think it a little or a light thing to get a ſoul ſaved, the redemption whereof ceaſeth for ever as to us or any creature: Behold herein the glory of grace eminently ſhineth forth, when there is ſuch a price payed for that which in ſome reſpect is of ſo little worth; and alſo the glory of juſtice, when ſo great a price is demanded and payed down for its ſatisfaction, by ſo worthy and excellent a perſon; and let none think little of ſin, the guilt whereof could not be otherways expiated, the chaſtiſement of our peace behoved to be on him.

5. What are the benefits that come by theſe ſufferings? *Anſw.* 1. The benefits are ſuch, that if he had not ſuffered for us, we ſhould have ſuffered all that he ſuffered, ourſelves. 2. More particularly, we have *firſt*, peace and pardon of ſin. *Secondly.* Healing by his ſufferings; ſo that if it be aſked, What procured pardon of ſin and peace with God? We anſwer, It is Chriſt's ſufferings: Or if it be aſked, What is the cauſe of God's juſtifying ſinners? We anſwer, It is Chriſt's ſatisfaction or ſuffering; and it is (by the way) much to be regretted, that ſuch is the ignorance of ſome, that if a queſtion be propoſed in di-

vers words and expreſſions; as if it ſhould be aſked, Wherefore are we pardoned? Wherefore are we juſtified? which is one and the ſame, they know not how to anſwer; but here ye are called to remember, that Chriſt being wounded, and his bearing the chaſtiſement due to you, is the cauſe of your pardon and juſtification. 2. Healing looks to ſanctification, as we hinted in the expoſition; ſo that if it be aſked, How comes it to paſs that a ſinner is made holy? we have it here anſwered, That tho' efficiently it comes by the Spirit, and be his work, yet meritoriouſly it comes by Chriſt's ſufferings he bought it, *by his ſtripes we are healed:* And under theſe two words, *peace* and *healing*, we take in all things needful or pertaining to life and godlineſs; for by *peace* the enmity is taken away, and we are reconciled to God, as Eph. ii. 14. *he is* ſaid to be *our peace*, and he who came *to ſpeak peace to all that are afar off and near*, and alſo by *peace* we underſtand all the effects of peace: 1. Pardon of ſin, juſtification, adoption, communion with God here and hereafter, peace with our own conſcience and with the creatures, eternal peace and glory, and all thoſe good things purchaſed by Chriſt's death: For the Hebrews under *peace* comprehended all good things: And under *healing* we take in ſanctification (as diſtinguiſhed, tho' not divided from thoſe other things mentioned) dying to ſin, and living to righteouſneſs, with the ſeveral degrees of their advance and progreſs, and the making of us to be without ſpot and wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, ſo that we have much advantage by Chriſt's purchaſe, and much prejudice through the want of it. By his death we are kept out of hell, and admitted to peace with God and every thing that is good; we have liberty to pray for all that is good; and are brought in his own way and time to the poſſeſſion of it; it is by the blood of ſprinkling that we have a new and living way made

patent

patent to us unto the moſt holy, and holineſs, in the way whereof we enter in thither.

6. To whom hath Chriſt procured all theſe good things? The text ſaith, its *our* and *we*, the chaſtiſement of *our* peace was on him, and by his ſtripes *we* are healed, to wit, the elect. Whence obſerve, 1. That the benefits of Chriſt's purchaſe redound only to the elect, there is a certain ſelect number to whom they are applyed, and not to all indifferently, it is only of as many as are healed, whoſe chaſtiſement he hath born: It is only they whom the Father hath given him, to whom he gives eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, John x. 28. They are effectually called, juſtified and ſanctified. 2. *Obſerve* that what Chriſt Jeſus hath purchaſed, and the benefits of his purchaſe, redound, and are extended to them that are guilty of hainous ſins; to them that are under tranſgreſſions and iniquities, that are at enmity with God, and under many pollutions, and moſt loathſome ſpiritual diſeaſes; to them who contemned and deſpiſed Chriſt, and judged him ſmitten and plagued of God, as is clear from the foregoing words; and to them which have gone ſtraying like loſt ſheep, as is clear from the words following.

This points at theſe two or three very uſeful things. 1. That the elect are by nature, and before Chriſt do them good, no better than others. 2. It ſhews the freedom of the grace of God that comes over that, and freely gives pardon, peace and healing to them. And 3*ly*, it ſerves to ſtrengthen a ſinner's faith, who is ſenſible of his enmity and ſinfulneſs, and to be a ground of encouragement to him, to ſtep to, and lay hold on Chriſt's purchaſe, becauſe it was for ſuch that he died; he may humbly, yet confidently ſay, Chriſt died even for ſuch as me, for them that wounded and pierced him by their tranſgreſſions and iniquities; for them that were at enmity with God, &c. And alas I am ſuch, and will therefore on the call of the goſpel come

come to him, and on his own terms endeavour to caſt myſelf on him.

7. How are theſe benefits, this juſtification, pardon of ſin, peace and healing, and all that is comprehended under them, derived from Chriſt to the ſinner that by faith fleeth unto him for refuge? *Anſwer*, Theſe two generals will clear it. 1. They are derived to us juſtly and in a legal way; Chriſt ſteps in our room, that we may come in his room. 2. They are derived to us freely, he was wounded and bruiſed that we might go free; he endured ſtripes that we might be healed; he got the buffets and bare the burden, and we get the benefits; there is not a grain-weight of it laid on us as it is ſatisfactory to divine juſtice. To clear this a little more about the deriving the benefits of Chriſt's purchaſe to us, there muſt be a reſpect had, 1. To the covenant of redemption, the ground of his ſuffering for us. 2. To the covenant of grace and reconciliation wherein the offer of theſe ſufferings, and the benefits purchaſed by them to us, and the term of both is made.

1. I ſay, that reſpect muſt be had to the covenant of redemption, wherein it was acted in the council of the God-head, that the Son of God ſhould become man, and ſuffer, and condignly ſatisfy divine juſtice by paying the price due by the elect, and that that price being laid down, it ſhould be made forthcoming to them for whom he paid it, and be reckoned theirs, and they ſet actually at liberty, when having recourſe thereto by faith; and here there is a legal ground for transferring Chriſt's purchaſe to and upon us; the bondſman ſatisfying, we the debtors are on that account abſolved in his own order and method, and have a right to ſeek the application of the price, and the benefits purchaſed by that price; Chriſt ſtands in our room at the bar, and ſentence paſſed on him to pay our debt; he ſatisfied according to his undertaking for us: And upon the other hand, we are brought in,

in, and the ſentence of juſtification paſſed on us on that account: *He*, ſaith the apoſtle, who knew no ſin, is made ſin for us, that in him we may be accounted righteous, and may be declared free (as we are) by virtue of his ſatisfaction.

But it may be objected here, What! Are we then abſolved from the very time of Chriſt's death and foreward? For anſwer, we would diſtinguiſh betwixt a right *to* the thing and a right *in* the thing (as we uſe to ſpeak;) betwixt *jus ad rem* and *jus in re*; the elect from Chriſt's death forward, and before too, have a right to the thing, but not in the thing, as to the application of it to themſelves; an elect perſon by virtue of Chriſt's ſatisfaction hath a legal right to his purchaſe before believing, but when he comes to believe, the obſtruction is taken away that hindred his application, and then he hath a new right not only *to*, but *in* Chriſt's purchaſe; even as a perſon that is *minor* or mad, may have a right to a great poſſeſſion, but by the law he is ſecluded from the uſe of it till he come to *majority*, and have the uſe of reaſon; and this diſtinction we have as one of the clauſes of the covenant, John vi. 39, 40. where firſt in the 39*th* ver. Chriſt ſays, *This is the Father's will that ſent me, that of all that he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day:* It is the Father's will that eternal life be given to as many as are given to Chriſt on his ſatisfaction, and Chriſt hath purchaſed it to them by his ſatisfaction abſolutely as to the event; and therefore they have an acceſſibleneſs to it, a right to it, and cannot but partake of it; yet not ſimply, but in the way that he hath laid down: And therefore 2*dly*. In the 40*th* ver. he ſaith, *This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one that ſeeth the Son and believeth on him may have eternal life;* by believing they come to the application of that to themſelves which they had a legal right to before by Chriſt's death.

2. Reſpect

2. Reſpect muſt be had to the covenant of grace, which is not quite another thing than the covenant of redemption, but the making offer of it, and the benefits contained in it in the preached goſpel, when Chriſt ſends out his ambaſſadors to woo and invite ſinners to Chriſt, and to bring them to the application of his purchaſe; and it is by cloſing with, and receiving of Chriſt's offer that the actual cure comes, and that by Chriſt's ſtripes our ſores are healed: Even as when a child that was *minor* becomes *major*, he comes to have a right to poſſeſs the ſame lands or ſums of money by the ſame law that gave him a legal or ſimple right to them before; or he comes to have a right *in* that, which before he had a right *to*: So elect ſouls that have a right to Chriſt's purchaſe before believing, while they are mad in nature, are under the curſe and wrath threatened in the word of God for not believing; but when they come to believe, they come to get an extract from the ſame word of their right *in* Chriſt's purchaſe; becauſe the words ſays, *He that believes, is paſt from death to life, and ſhall not come into condemnation;* and ſo the ſame word that did condemn before believing, doth now abſolve upon a ſinner's believing; and we come at this abſolution by receiving Chriſt's offer in the covenant of grace: And if it be aſked, How comes it that the receiving of Chriſt's free offer in the covenant of grace, gives a right to Chriſt's purchaſe? We anſwer, It is by virtue of the covenant of redemption, wherein it is ſo tranſacted betwixt God and the Mediator; ſo that there is the offer of the covenant received, and the covenant itſelf that concur for making over and deriving a complete right to wretched ſinners in Chriſt's purchaſe.

Let the *1ſt* uſe of this be for our inſtruction and information, which is the end why we have choſen in this way by this ſhort view to give you in a very ſhort ſum, the marrow of the goſpel; and if ye remember

member these few questions, ye may be in a capacity not only to answer us, but through grace to exercise faith on Christ; and we think ye will all readily grant, that those who cannot at all answer them, should not go to the Lord's supper: And therefore that ye may retain them, we shall shortly resume them. 1. What condition is man in by nature? *Answ.* Under sin and misery, even under the curse of God; or thus, every man is a sinner, and hath a sinful nature, or, he is under transgressions and iniquities, is naturally loathsome, wants peace with God, and hath need of healing; let this in the first place sink in your hearts. 2. How is man freed from this sinfulness and misery? *Answ.* He cannot be free from it, till there be a condign satisfaction made to divine justice, wounding and bruising must be to procure healing, and chastisement must be to bring about our peace. That word, Exod. xxxiv. *Who will by no means acquit the guilty*, should always be remembered, and faith should look to a Saviour for satisfaction. 3. Who can satisfy? *Answ.* Neither man nor angel can do it, no penances, no prayers nor performances of any mere creature will do it, but *he* only that was wounded and bruised, he who by nature is the Son of God, the express image of the Father's person, and who, in respect of his human nature, was born of the virgin Mary, like to us in all things except sin; it is he that satisfies justice, and it is by no other way that we get pardon and peace with God, and holiness. 4. What way doth Christ satisfy justice, and make peace betwixt God and sinners? *Answ.* He entered himself in our room, and as surety undertook our debt, suffered the condign punishment that was due for our sins, and paid the price that we should have paid; he in a manner left heaven and became man, led a mean life in the world, drank the cup of his Father's wrath, was wounded, bruised, chastised, and died a cursed death, whereof his hanging on the cross was but a sign. 5. What benefits

come to us by his ſufferings? *Anſw.* Pardon of ſin, peace with God and healing; the conſcience by his blood is ſprinkled from dead works, the perſon abſolved, reconciled to God, made whole, and made at laſt to be without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; and this is not as Papiſts blaſphemouſly ſpeak, a putative effect, but a moſt real one. 6. Who are made partakers of this pardon, peace and healing? *Anſw.* The elect have right to it, and by believing they make the application; therefore it is ſaid here, *our* and *we*. And we may look upon the prophet ſpeaking in the name of all the elect, or in the name of the believing elect, who on believing are actually healed. The elect then are healed, and the way how is by faith making application of Jeſus Chriſt. 7. How in juſtice can he be condemned that was free of ſin, and how can we be abſolved that were guilty? *Anſw.* He in juſtice was condemned, becauſe as our ſurety he came in our room, and undertook to pay our debt; and on the ſame ground we wretched ſinners, may in his way make application of his purchaſe; becauſe it was on theſe terms that he undertook the debt, that we might be ſet free; and it is on theſe terms that it is offered in the goſpel; that ſeeing he hath paid for elect ſinners, they may upon the hearing of the offer, cloſe with it. But how may the ſinner apply it? *Anſw.* Not only becauſe it is free, and freely offered, but by cleaving to it by faith, as the prophet doth here; it is not only to apply it ſimply, but to ſtep in and reſt upon it in the terms it is offered; ſo that as on the one part Jeſus Chriſt became really liable to ſuffering, and ſatisfied for our ſins, when he ſaid, *Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will;* ſo upon the other part, the believing ſinner comes to apply the price paid, by embracing the price, and acquieſcing in the ſatisfaction, and laying hold of it as his own, and by his being brought to ſay in faith, Let his wounding be my pardon, let his chaſtiſement

be

be my peace, and let his ſtripes be my healing: By this means as the law had a right to Chriſt for his paying the elect's debt, ſo they by believing get a right to the promiſe of pardon and healing; for if the bargain was ſure on the one ſide to procure wounding to Chriſt, as if he had been the ſinner himſelf; ſo on the other ſide, the bargain is as ſure; the believer is ſet free, and may be as really comforted, as if he had a righteouſneſs of his own, or never had ſinned.

Uſe 2. Therefore there is here wonderful matter of conſolation to believers, that what was juſtice to Chriſt is grace and mercy to us, that which was pain to him, is pleaſure to us; his ſorrow our comfort, his wounding our pardon, his ſtripes our healing, *&c.*

Uſe 3. As ye would not prejudge yourſelves of theſe benefits which Chriſt hath purchaſed, make your peace with God through Chriſt. If your pardon and peace be not obtained this way, ye will never get it, but ye ſhall be made to pay your own debt, and be liable to wrath eternally, becauſe of inability to pay your debt to the full: Therefore ſtep to, and make the offer welcome, how ſinful and undone ſoever ye be; the more ſenſible ye be, ye are the more welcome; this is the particular uſe of the doctrine. O! let theſe things ſink in your hearts, that ye are ſinners, great ſinners, under wrath, and at enmity with God; that Jeſus Chriſt is the Saviour of loſt ſinners, and that there is no way to pardon and peace but by cloſing with him, and laying hold on his ſatisfaction; that ye may be drawn to caſt yourſelves on this everlaſting covenant, for obtaining the benefits that Chriſt hath purchaſed. And himſelf bleſs what hath been ſpoken for this end and uſe.

SERMON XXIII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 5.

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

IT were no small progress in Christianity, to know and believe the truths that are implied and contained in this same verse; the Lord by the prophet is giving a little compend of the work of redemption by his saving of sinners from death, through, and by the wounding of the Mediator. We did a little open the meaning of the words, and gave a sum of the doctrines contained in them, at least of some of them which do contribute to this scope.

The prophet is here speaking of Christ's sufferings, with respect to the cause of them, and the effect that followed them, and shews how this was indeed the mistake and blasphemous imputation that we had of, and were ready to put on him, even to judge him smitten and plagued of God for his own sins; whereas God hath another design; he was altogether without sin, but he was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities; *we* were at enmity with God, and he took on him the chastisement of *our* peace; and this is the effect, to procure healing to *us*.

We shall now speak a word to three *doctrines* further besides what we spoke to the last day, which are these, 1. That there was an eternal design, plot, and transaction betwixt God and the Mediator, as to Christ's suffering for the redeeming of elect sinners before

fore he actually ſuffered. This the prophet ſpeaks of as a thing concluded; for the cauſe of his ſufferings was condeſcended on, and the end and fruit of them was determined, which implies an *antecedent* tranſaction betwixt the Father and him for putting him in the room of ſinners; and by this tranſaction juſtice hath acceſs to exact the payment of this price; he interpoſed, and the Father exacts of him the payment of their debt, and ſeeks ſatisfaction from him for all that he bargained for. 2. That this tranſaction or deſign concerning the redemption of elect ſinners, is in reſpect of Chriſt's ſuffering and ſatisfying of juſtice, fully and actually peformed, he undertook to be wounded and bruiſed, and he was accordingly actually wounded and bruiſed. The tranſaction, as to the engagement in it, and efficacy of it, took place in Iſaïah's time, and before his time; but as to the actual performance of what the Mediator engaged himſelf to ſuffer, it is ſpoken of prophetically by him as a thing done, becauſe to be done; and now it is done, and indeed long ago. 3. That the ſatisfying of juſtice by the Mediator's ſufferings according to his engagement, proves as effectual to abſolve, juſtify and heal thoſe, even the groſſeſt ſinners, that come under this bargain and tranſaction, as if they had actually ſuffered, and paid and ſatisfied their own debt themſelves; Their ſins are pardoned through his ſufferings; their deadly wounds are healed by his ſtripes, as if they had never had a wound; their count is ſtruck and croſſed as clean out, as if they had never had any debt; they are acquitted and ſet free as if they had never been guilty.

Theſe three *doctrines* lie very near the life of the goſpel, and the prophet in this chapter, and particularly in this verſe, often mentions them. Our purpoſe is only ſhortly to explain them to you, as a ſhort ſum and compend of the tract of the covenant of redemption: The *firſt* of them ſhews the riſe of the work

work of redemption: The *second* shews the means by which it is executed. The *third* holds out the effect and consequence, and the end of all.

For the *first* then, There was (we say) an eternal transaction betwixt God and Jesus Christ the Mediator, concerning the redemption of sinners. His actual redeeming, by being wounded and bruised, supposeth this; for the Son is no more liable to suffering (not to speak of his suitableness) than any other of the persons of the blessed Godhead, had there not been an antecedent transaction; there was no obligation nor tye on him to be wounded, and to enter into the room of sinners as their surety, for payment of their debt, if there had not been a prior engagement; neither could his wounding and bruising have proved useful, or have brought healing to us, if this prior engagement had not been. And this is it which we call the *covenant of redemption*, which we would not extend so as in all things to stretch it to the properties of those covenants and bargains which are amongst men, it being in some respect an expression used to make grace more discernable to us that can conceive so little of grace's way. This transaction or covenant of redemption is sometimes called *the Father's will* and *his law;* as Psal. xl. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart;* and John vi. 38. It is called so, *I came from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;* so also John xvii. 14. it is called the Father's work in one respect, and the Son's work in another. *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do*, which is the prosecution of the same contrivance usually called a *covenant;* because as to the essentials, it hath the nature of a *covenant*, to wit, two parties agreeing, and terms whereupon they agree; and is well ordered in all things for prosecuting and carrying on the design of saving lost sinners; called, Acts ii. 23. the *determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God;* there was a plot and design in God's counsel

counsel concerning Christ's sufferings, whereof his sufferings were the execution.

To clear it a little, we should consider these five things in it. 1. The parties. 2. The matter about which it is. 3. The rise and occasion of it. 4. The terms wherein the form of it stands, or the means whereupon it is undertaken. 5. Some properties of this covenant.

1. For the parties, upon the one side is God essentially considered, or all the three Persons of the glorious God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are all concurring in this covenant, it being the act of the determinate counsel of God; and in this respect God is the party to whom the satisfaction for lost sinners is made, and he is also the party condescending to accept of the satisfaction. And upon the other side, the party engaging to make satisfaction, is Jesus Christ, the second Person of the blessed, dreadful, and adorable Trinity, personally considered, now becoming the Head of the elect, that he may have them all with himself to be one mystical body. In the first respect, all the three Persons, that same one blessed God gives the command, or requires a satisfaction of God, and concur as the infinitely wise orderer of the decree; and in the second respect, Jesus Christ as Mediator, undertakes to make satisfaction, Psal. xl. 6, 7. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire:* God as it were making the offer, what can, or shall be given to me for the redemption of sinners? sacrifice and offerings will not please, nor are accepted by me: Then follows the Mediator's part, *Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God;* for though in the first respect, all the persons in the Trinity be on the one side, being of one will; yet in the other respect, Christ Jesus as Mediator comes in on the other side to do his will.

2. As to the matter about which this covenant is, it is about the satisfying of justice, and making of peace

peace between God and loſt ſinners; it is that we might be pardoned, juſtified, have peace made with God, and be healed. It is true, there is an end above and beyond this, even the glory of God's rich grace, and condeſcending love, that ſtoops ſo low to ſave ſinners; but ſinners pardon, and peace with God, and their healing, is the immediate end: Or if we come nearer, the matter about which it is, is the redeeming of the elect, for theſe words in the text, *we* and *us*, are of equal extent with them that are juſtified and reconciled, and whom he actually healeth by his wounds and ſtripes, ſo that whoever they be who are never juſtified and healed, they are not comprehended in this bargain.

3. The riſe and occaſion of this covenant may be gathered from theſe three. 1. There is the ſuppoſing of man's ſin and fall; for whatever election doth, redemption doth moſt certainly ſuppoſe man to be loſt and under ſin. 2. There is God's decree, not to pardon ſin without a ſatisfaction. 3. There is God's election preceding, or his purpoſe to ſave ſome for the glory of his grace, which are the elect, who are ſaid to be *given to Chriſt*. Theſe three are the riſe and occaſion of the covenant of redemption: Man hath ſinned, the threatning muſt be executed, and juſtice ſatisfied; and yet God hath for the glory of his grace, elected a certain number to life, and that muſt needs ſtand firm. And theſe three ſeeming to thwart one with another, gives the occaſion and riſe to the excellent and admirable contrivance of this way; how the loſt ſinner ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as juſtice ſhall be ſatisfied, and not wronged in the leaſt, and juſtice ſo ſatisfied, that yet the decree of election by grace ſhall ſtand.

4. As for the terms (wherein the form of the covenant ſtands,) and the means by which theſe ends may be brought about; to wit, how the redemption of loſt ſinners may be attained, juſtice may be ſatisfied, and the

the glory of grace made to shine; and how any thing that makes these seem to justle and thwart, might be guarded against; and that was it which (to speak so with reverence) put God to the consultation about it; which shews the excellency of the covenant of redemption, and the deep draughts that are about it, for otherways and properly God needs not consult or advise: They are shortly these, 1. God's offer to redeem man, if his justice may be satisfied; and if any responsal person will become surety and undertake to pay the elects debt. 2. The Son's accepting of the offer, and undertaking or engaging to pay their debt, upon condition that his payment and satisfaction shall be accounted the elects, and accepted for them. 3. The Father's acceptation of this engagement and undertaking according to his offer; and the Mediator's accepting of it, and acquiescing in it, he holds the bargain, to speak so, and so it is a sealed covenant. The first is comprehended in these words, *Sacrifices and offerings thou didst not desire*, Psal. xl. insinuating that God did desire something: The second in these words, *Mine ears thou hast opened, then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will*, which implies the Father's acceptation as well as Christ's undertaking; and it also points at the way how the satisfaction is made effectual; especially if we compare these words of the Psalm with Heb. x. 5, 6. we will find that they relate to Christ's humiliation in general, for it is in the Psalm, *Mine ear hast thou opened:* But in Heb. x. 5. it is, *A body hast thou prepared me:* And where it is said in the Psalm, *I delight to do thy will*, the apostle says, *By the which will we are sanctified.* The Father makes the offer on the terms of a satisfaction to justice; the Son as Mediator accepts the offer, and undertakes for the elect; here am I, to do thy will on the same terms that the offer is made; and the Father accepts of the Son's engagement, according to that word, Matth. iii. *This is my*

beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; he offers himself surety for sinners, and the Father is content to accept of him as their surety: In the one respect it is called the *Father's pleasure*, ver. 10. of this chapter, *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him*, &c. because the terms were so proposed; and in the other respect, it is called the *Mediator's pleasure*, or *satisfaction*, ver. 11. because the condition proposed is satisfying to him, *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*: He undertakes to pay, and God accepts of his undertaking, and obliges himself to absolve the believer: And the words following, *He shall see his seed, and the travel of his soul, and be satisfied; and by his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many:* are promises made to him on supposition of his making satisfaction: 2 Cor. v. ult. The first part of the transaction is, *He hath made him to be sin for us, that knew no sin;* and the other part of it is, *That we might be made the righteousness of God through him:* He accepting of the bargain, obtains a right to a justifying and absolving sentence by virtue of his suffering, for which cause these words are added, *in him*, or *through him:* This shews the clearness of God's justice in proceeding with the Mediator, the ground of sinners justification through him, and gives sinners a warrant to make use of Christ's satisfaction as theirs, because it was so agreed upon in the council of the God-head.

5. We come now to speak a little to some properties of this covenant, and shall content ourselves with three or four of them that make for the scope, as, 1. The justice and equity of it. 2. The faithfulness of it. 3. The freeness of it. And 4. The wisdom that shines in this bargain; and so pass by the rest.

1. *The justice and equity* of this transaction may appear in these respects. 1. That the Father should be satisfied, and that he that was wronged should have his honour restored; that the threatning given out in his law should take effect, that the soul that sins should in

in his own, or in the surety's person die; and that a suitable recompence should be made to justice before the sinner should be absolved. 2. Justice appears in this respect, that when the Son of God, the Mediator, offers to become man, and to endure and suffer all that the elect should have suffered, his sufferings should be accepted as a satisfaction; because the justice of God, yea, the holiness, power, and greatness of God, are as gloriously manifested in Christ's satisfaction, as if man had suffered; nay, there would not have been such an amends and satisfaction made to justice, even if all creatures had suffered: Justice by this means hath more satisfaction than it could have had otherways; and hereby the holiness of God, and the severity of his justice, as well as the condescending love of God, is the more manifested, that he himself should condescend to satisfy; therefore Rom. iii. 26. it is said, *That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus:* God is just, in that he will not only have satisfaction, but an equivalent satisfaction for the restoring of his justice to its declarative glory, wherein it suffered by man's fall. 3. Justice appears in this respect, that the Mediator satisfying justice, those for whom he suffered should be acquitted, and have the sentence of absolution past in their favours; which the rather we should take notice of, that we may know the redemption purchased and bestowed by the Mediator, is by an exact satisfying of justice, and not by removing of our sins, as he did our diseases, nor by pardoning of them by an authority committed to him; but, as I said, by a real and actual satisfying of the justice of God for them; therefore Luke xxiv. it is said, *He behoved to suffer these things, and then to enter into his glory*, there was a necessity of it, because of the justice of this covenant, for the Son, not only to become man, and be in a low condition, but to become a curse, and to die the cursed death of the cross.

A second property is *faithfulness* on all sides: Faithfulness on the Father's side in his word and promise to the Son, *All that are given of the Father are made to come to him, and there is nothing lost*, John vi. 37, 44, 45. faithfulness on the Son's side, performing all according to his undertaking, *fulfilling all righteousness*: Therefore when in the one word he says, *Deliver me from this hour*: In the next word he says, *But for this cause came I unto this hour*: It was my errand into the world, and now I am to go about it by and by. *And I lay down my life for my sheep myself, no man taketh my life from me, but I have power to lay it down, and power to take it up again*: His faithfulness also appears in keeping all that are committed to his trust, *None of them shall perish, but he shall raise them up at the last day*; therefore he is called the *good* or *faithful* Shepherd.

3. It is a *free* covenant. It is *just*, as betwixt God and the Mediator; but as to the elect, it is most *free*: By his wounds we have pardon, and by his stripes we have healing; *The chastisement of our peace was on him*: There is not one grain weight or worth to be satisfied by us: *He was made sin for us*; he was made the curse, even the wrath-pacifying-sacrifice and offering, *that we might be made the righteousness of God*, not through ought in ourselves, but *through him*, 2 Cor. v. ult.

4. It is a most wise contrivance. For if the Son had not become man and Mediator, how could justice have been satisfied, or the elect pardoned and healed? They could not satisfy for themselves, and no creature could satisfy for them; therefore the only wise God finds out a wise means for such an end, as is the saving of the elect, in a way wherein justice and mercy, or free grace, sweetly kiss each other, and wherein they both shine forth conspicuously and radiantly.

That which we would say in short concerning this covenant, is this: That Jesus Christ hath undertaken to

to pay the elect's debt, and hath ſtepped into their room; and God hath imputed unto him their ſin, and accepted of a ſatisfaction from him for them. And all this in a legal and juſt way, ſo as there is acceſs before the throne of God, for them to plead for the application of his righteouſneſs by virtue of this covenant; that as really and faithfully as Chriſt performed his undertaking to God, and his ſatisfaction was accepted for them, they may as really and on good ground expect the application of it to them; for tho' all be of grace to us, yet it is a bargain on juſt and legal terms betwixt God and the Mediator: Therefore there is a title and right in juſtice for the elect when they come to Chriſt, that his ſatisfaction ſhall ſtand for them, as being members of his body, and in whoſe room and place he is ſatisfied: Hence it is ſaid, 1 John ii. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous:* And whereon is this righteouſneſs founded? The next words tell us, *He is the propitiation for our ſins:* He hath payed the price that was due by us, and we may ſeek the application of it to us according to the tranſaction paſt betwixt the Father and him, now performed; which is the next point.

The 2*d doctrine* is, That this tranſaction and deſign concerning the redemption of ſinners, is not only undertaken, but fully performed, as is clear, Acts ii. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate counſel of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain:* The eternal purpoſe concerning this is now executed: As to the efficacy of his ſufferings, *He is* indeed *the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the world;* becauſe neither the Son's undertaking was queſtioned by the Father, nor the Father's promiſe queſtioned by the Son: To ſpeak ſo with reverence of ſuch a myſtery, the Father before his coming truſts him upon his engagement with the ſalvation of ſo many elect ſouls as he had given him: And the Son conſidered

fidered as Mediator, truſts the Father with the juſtifying of them, according to the promiſe made to him in the 11*th* verſe of this chapter: But the actual performance of the undertaking was not till Chriſt ſuffered. This actual performance of the covenant comprehends theſe things ſhortly. 1. That as this plot and deſign of redemption was laid down, ſo it hath the performance by all the parties covenanting: It is actually performed according to the terms of it. 2. That it hath the real effects covenanted for, actually and really brought about. It hath ſome things real and effectual following it, to ſpeak ſo, whereof Chriſt's actual ſuffering was a part, and a main part.

1. I ſay it is performed by all parties according to the terms, and hath its real effect in theſe reſpects, 1. Chriſt Jeſus hath according to this covenant, ſiſted himſelf before the bar of juſtice, and undertaken our debt. 2. Juſtice hath purſued Chriſt for our debt, and hath exacted payment of it from him: The cup that belonged to us was put in his hand, and he was made to drink it, in which reſpect it is ſaid, *He was made a curſe for us*, Gal. iii. The ſword of divine juſtice awaked againſt him, and did ſmite him. 3. Jeſus Chriſt according to his undertaking, doth accept of the claim, undergoes the debt, and ſatisfies juſtice. Therefore when he ſtands in our room, as if he had been the guilty perſon, he opens not his mouth to juſtify himſelf; he ſays not, theſe are not my ſins, but is as dumb, as the ſheep is before the ſhearer, becauſe he was our ſurety: The everlaſting covenant, to ſay ſo, ſtood regiſtred over his head, and he is made to count for all that was due by, and to us. 4. It is performed in this reſpect, that the Father purſues not the elect on this account to be ſatisfied of them, who as ſoon as they accept of the covenant, are actually juſtified and abſolved; indeed while they are in nature the ſentence ſtill ſtands; curſed is he that ſinneth and believeth not: Yet by virtue of his performance

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of the transaction they have a legal right to justification, and the promise to him stands good, that the elect by his knowledge shall be justified, and it hath an actual performance in all them that believe; they are really made free as he was made the sinner. 5. In respect of the manner, 1. It is performed exactly according to the covenant, even as it was agreed upon, that for so many he should suffer and procure eternal life, and so it is; eternal life is given to so many according to the condition of this covenant and bargain. 2. As it was a bargain wherein justice was to be satisfied; so it was exactly satisfied, Christ Jesus gets nothing down, not one farthing is remitted, but satisfies all, pays down the full price, he drinks out all the wrath contained in the cup, till it come to that sweet word, uttered by him amongst his last words on the cross, *It is finished.*

The 3*d doctrine* is, That though elect sinners be as well sinners by nature, and as gross sinners as others, yet by virtue of this covenant, and upon condition of their accepting of it, they may obtain, and do actually obtain peace with God, pardon and healing, as if they had never sinned, or as if they had satisfied the justice of God themselves: This is the very end of this transaction, *He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed:* His wounds, bruises and stripes effectually procured justification and healing to us. And this is the ground of that which we call *imputed righteousness*, and shews how it comes to pass, that we are made righteous by the righteousness of another, scornfully called *putative righteousness* by Papists: But considering what is in the former doctrines, and in this, we will find it to be a clear truth on which our justification, and the whole weight of our salvation hangs; that the believing sinner closing with Christ's satisfaction is as effectually absolved from sin, as if he had never sinned;

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Christ's satisfaction becomes as really his, as if he had payed the debt himself: And if we consider these three. 1. The great design of the covenant of redemption betwixt God and the Mediator, 2. The faithfulness of God in this covenant, in performing his part on the terms on which the Mediator laid down a price for the elect. 3. The excellency and efficacy of the price payed with respect to the covenant: We will find that there is clear access in law, or according to the decree of God manifested (the decree is called a *law*, *Thy law is within my heart*) for the grossest sinners that come under this bargain and close with this covenant, their obtaining peace, pardon, justification and healing, is as if they had never sinned, or had satisfied themselves, and that they may confidently expect it on this ground.

1. I say, if we consider the great end and design of the covenant betwixt God and the Mediator, we will find it to be the justification of the elect: Christ suffered not for any sin that was inherently in himself; he had no sin, there was no guile found in his mouth; no quarrel betwixt God and him on his own account, but he was wounded for *our* transgressions, the chastisement of *our* peace was on him; to make peace betwixt God and us by his wounding, was the great design of the covenant of redemption: And can that design hold, if his satisfaction come not in the room of ours, and stand not for our satisfaction and payment? In man's law the surety paying the debt, proves valid for the principal debtor; and when this is the design of God in the covenant of redemption, how to get the debt of bankrupt sinners payed, and themselves set at liberty, and when this is found out as the means; *A body hast thou prepared for me;* the covenant must be as real on the one side as it is on the other: That is, as real and effectual to make the believer in Christ just, as it was real and effectual to make Christ to be accounted the sinner, and to be dealt with as such.

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We may clear it further in these two. 1. By looking to Christ typified in the offerings under the law: When the sinner came with his offering, he laid his hand on the head of the beast, especially of the *scapegoat*, to shew that Jesus Christ who was to come to be both Priest and Sacrifice, was to bear the sins of the elect, as they were to be set free: That he was to lay his neck down to the knife of justice that the stroke might be kept off our throat. 2. We are so justified by Christ as Christ was made sin for us, now our sins became really Christ's, not that he was made the sinner inherently, that were blasphemous to be thought or spoken of; but he was reckoned the sinner, and was substituted in the room of sinners, as if he had been the sinner, and was made to satisfy for original sin, and for actual sin; as if he had been guilty of them by committing them: Therefore, 2 Cor. v. ult. he is said to be *made sin for us*, and Gal. iii. To be made *a curse for us;* and 1 Pet. ii. 24. *To bear our sins in his own body on the tree:* And if he suffered for us, and if we partake of his righteousness, as he did of our sins; then our justification really follows, and we are absolved and made righteous through his satisfaction closed with by faith, as if we had never sinned: The parallel is clear, 2 Cor. v. ult. *He was made sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* so that Christ was made sin, in the same manner as we are made righteous: That as legally as he who had no debt, was made liable to our debt, so as legally we partake of his righteousness, and are declared free: Even as the debtor is legally freed from the debt which his surety hath paid, and cannot be liable to it; so the believer, by Christ's satisfaction is freed from the debt of sin, and absolved and declared righteous. And though this may seem strange and a wonder, to be a sinner, and yet in some respect free from sin, under guilt, and yet absolved; yet Christ's satisfaction is as real and effectual as to the

believer, as if he had satisfied himself, because his surety hath satisfied for him.

2. If we consider God's faithfulness in this covenant in performing his part, according to the terms of it, the matter is clear; for as the Mediator hath performed his part according to his engagement; so it is impossible but God must perform his, and must accept of the satisfaction in the name of the elect, and upon their believing justify them; for as it was the Father's will, that he should lay down his life for his sheep, so it was the will of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that believers in him should through his satisfaction have eternal life, John vi. 39, 40. when he had said before, 'I came not to do my own will, but the will 'of him that sent me;' he subjoins, 'This is the Fa-'ther's will which sent me, that of all that he hath 'given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it 'up again at the last day;' where the satisfaction that Christ should make is implied, and it is a great one. And what satisfaction shall he have for that? even the salvation of the elect, 'This is the will of 'him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, 'and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, 'and I will raise him up at the last day.' And verse 10th of this chapter, it is clear that he shall not want satisfaction; for *he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied;* and what is the satisfaction? *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many;* he shall be the cause of the justifying of many, and they shall be actually absolved in due time. And what is the ground of it? *For he shall bear their iniquities;* and therefore as God is faithful, he shall get that which he merited and purchased for them, applied unto them.

3. If we consider the excellent and equivalent price that Jesus Christ hath paid, and that with respect to the covenant, we have a clear ground why the believer may expect and be confident to be absolved and declared

clared free; it is no mean price, gold, silver, or precious stones, but the blood of him that was and is God; which we say should be considered not simply, but with respect to the covenant, and to the end wherefore he suffered and shed his blood; for though it be no comfort to a sinner simply that Christ suffered, yet when he considers that it was for this end, to wit, that justice might be satisfied, and that those for whom he satisfied might be justified, and made free; the believing sinner may hence reason, if there was a reality in justice pursuing of him as my surety, and a reality and efficacy in his satisfaction; and if it was full and complete, so as justice was fully satisfied with it, then there was a reality of mercy, pardon, justification, and peace with God, and of healing to and for me, they being made good to me upon the condition of believing: And in this respect, though it be grace to pardon sin as to us, yet it is justice in God to give Christ the satisfaction for the travail of his soul, as well as he gave God satisfaction to his justice. And the equivalent of that which the elect should have paid, being paid to justice by Christ their surety, the Lord cannot, nor will shun or shift the pardoning of a believing sinner according to the covenant.

The *uses* are five, 1. Of instruction, whereby we may have a map of God's way of saving sinners, and of the way of sinners coming to get salvation through Jesus Christ.

2. To stir us up to admire the love of God contriving such a design for the salvation of lost sinners, and the love of God that gave his Son, and likewise the love of the Son that engaged to come, and hath come and paid the debt.

3. It gives a notable warrant to the faith of a sinner to take hold of, and close with Christ, and to rest upon his satisfaction for justification and healing; because he hath God and the Mediator covenanting for this very end, the Mediator engaging to satisfy, and

God engaging to receive the ſatisfaction, and to juſtify all thoſe who ſhall accept of it, and reſt upon it.

4. It is therefore a notable ground of encouragement, and of exhortation to take hold of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his ſatisfaction. People ſhould not be ſcared at him, but truſt their ſalvation to him, and be ſure the bargain will not fail; as it is ſure that the Mediator hath ſatisfied, it is as ſure that his ſatisfaction ſhall be made good to believers in him.

5. To reprove the neglecters and deſpiſers of Jeſus Chriſt, and of this offered ſalvation through him; when he hath taken the threatning and curſe of the law on himſelf to make out the promiſe to them, it muſt be a great aggravation of mens guilt to ſlight him. It ſerves alſo to comfort a poor ſinner that hath many ſins and challenges, and knows not how to be rid of them. The covenant ſays, our ſins are transferred on the Mediator, that we might be ſet free; Chriſt Jeſus covenanted on the terms of juſtice to make way for us, to covenant on the terms of mercy, God covenanted with him to purſue our ſin in him, and he covenanted to impute that ſatisfaction freely to us. Hence is that never enough noted ſaying, 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf:* It is juſtice on his part, he ſatisfied for pardon of ſin, and peace to them; but on the elect's part it is grace, God is reconciled to them, not imputing their ſin to them, but it is for Chriſt's ſatisfaction that he freely forgives them their ſin; ſo that what coſt him dear comes moſt freely to us; and this is no ſmall ground of comfort to a conſcience preſſed with ſin. God fix theſe things in your hearts!

SER-

SERMON XXIV.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 5.

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

IF there were more deep conviction amongst us of our natural deadness in sin, and of that fearful condition that naturally we lie under by our liableness to the wrath and curse of God, all men and women having by nature God's curse, as the sentence of the law registered against them; the reading of such a text, wherein a way of remedy is holden forth, would be more welcome to us; and we are persuaded that such a thorough conviction would not only make the word more lovely and delightsome to us, but more plain and easy to be understood by us, and one sermon would thus be more profitable and effectual than many are to you while in a secure condition; when people are not under the deep and due conviction of their sin and misery, they have no serious thoughts, that the preaching of the gospel concerns them in particular, and that their souls in need of that which is spoken to them therein.

Ye may remember we spoke somewhat from these words for clearing the way of making peace betwixt God and sinners, and for holding forth the way that God in his infinite wisdom hath laid down for setting of poor sinners that are lying under the curse, free; for this end there was an eternal transaction and covenant entered into by the Father and the Son; the Father

Father demanding, and the Son accepting, and satisfying as Mediator and the sinners surety what was due to justice for the sins of the elect, as was determined in the council of God; from which blessed bargain all our salvation flows as from the fountain, and runs down as a river to us.

That which now we are to speak a little to, is some profitable *uses* which are the scope of all, and tend to lead you to the knowledge of the use of such doctrine, and not only to know it, but to engage you to make suitable practical improvement of it.

There are several sorts of *uses* that flow from this verse whence the preceeding doctrines have been drawn.

The 1*st* sort is for information, which ye who are more ignorant, who have not so much light in you as to discover the way to heaven, should especially take heed to, tho' they be useful to all: And 1*st*, Ye should know and be informed in this, that all men and women, without exception, are lying under transgression and iniquities, and liable to be smitten and cursed of God till these be taken away; but this having been spoke of before we need not insist on it now: But the truth is, neither law nor gospel hath gained thus much ground on the great part of you, as to bring you really to know, that naturally ye are dead in sins and trespasses, and till this be received and digested, other truths cannot to any purpose profit you.

2*dly*, Ye should know and consider the necessity of a satisfaction to the justice of God before sinners can be freed from sin, and from the curse and wrath of God that they are under and liable to, by reason of their original corruption and actual transgressions. Do ye think that Jesus Christ did needlessly enter into the covenant of redemption, and engage to satisfy, and actually and really did suffer and satisfy justice? if men might come so easily to heaven as many suppose, it had been needless. Would God, think ye, have

have wounded the Surety, his own dear Son, if thoſe who lie under ſin and wrath might have by another way ſatisfied juſtice and reſtored him his honour? Nay, ere their peace could be made this behoved to be; and yet I much doubt, if any do think that there is any ſuch diſtance betwixt God and them, which a word of prayer, or confeſſion, or ſome penance cannot remove. This is, alas! the woful ignorance of many that live under the goſpel; but ye ſhould know that a ſatisfaction behoved to be, and ſuch a ſatisfaction as was equivalent to the wrong done, and ſuitable and ſatisfying to him that was wronged by ſin, and that among all the creatures it could not be found: Yea, ye may read from this, the dreadful effects of ſin, and what a horrible thing it is to have your tranſgreſſions to account for with God yourſelves. If ſin brought ſuch heavy things on the Surety, what will it bring on the ſinner, who hath all his days ſtood upon terms with God, to ſpeak ſo, and would not make peace with him when he was earneſtly invited to it? Yea, we may from this know, what is that moſt horrible, dreadful, and confounding ſentence which is abiding all of you that ſtand it out, and do not make your peace with God through this ſatisfaction of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, when he ſhall be made eternally to bear the wrath that ſin deſerves, which yet is intollerable.

3*dly*, Ye ſhould hence know, and ſtudy to be clear and diſtinct in your knowledge of this precious truth, how a ſinner that by nature is under ſin and wrath, and hath ground every day to look for it, may be freed from that curſe and wrath. To prevent which, the Lord hath made a covenant with the Son, who is appointed Mediator for making peace betwixt God and ſinners, by ſatisfying his juſtice for them, and by paying the ſame debt that was due by them; ſo that this wrath is prevented, and their peace is made by virtue of this covenant of redemption, wherein theſe

two

two clauſes are agreed and concluded upon betwixt theſe two infinitely reſponſal parties. 1. That Chriſt ſhall become the ſinner, and be handled as a ſinner; though there was no ſin in him. 2. That the elect ſinner that by nature was the child of wrath even as well as others, ſhall be freed from the wrath to come by virtue of his ſatisfaction. Theſe are the two pillars that our ſalvation is built upon, and that our peace and reconciliation with God flow from; by his wounding and bruiſing we are pardoned, *The chaſtiſement of our peace was on him, and by his ſtripes we are healed.*

To clear this a little; this covenant ſhould be conſidered, 1. As it looks to the parties and their ſeveral actions. 2. As it looks to the execution thereof in all the ſteps of it.

For the *firſt*, There are three parties that concur in their own place. *1ſt*, God is the party offended, and he is here bruiſing and wounding the Mediator: he is the judge, and ſtands ready to execute the ſentence that ſtands in his law againſt ſinners, if he get not an equivalent ſatisfaction. *2dly*, Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator is the party wounded and bruiſed; the Mediator's part is to ſatisfy juſtice, to pay the price and perform the ſatisfaction reſolved upon in the council of God, of ſuitable and ſufficient value for the redemption of the elect, according to his engagement; and he is actually wounded and bruiſed: God determined what ſhall ſatisfy, Chriſt Jeſus accepts of the determination, engages to ſatisfy, and does actually ſatisfy for elect ſinners. A *3d* party is, We poor ſinners. He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, *&c.* It is the elect ſinner, or the ſinner, who being made in due time ſenſible of ſin, and afraid of wrath, and who being kindly touched with the apprehenſion of it, and cleared as to the firmneſs and freeneſs of the covenant, and as to the fulneſs of Chriſt's ſatisfaction, doth by faith flee unto Jeſus Chriſt and ſubmit to his ſatisfaction, and betakes himſelf to that only for righteouſneſs,

neſs. Chriſt lays down the price, and the believing ſinner pleads for intereſt in it, and for the benefit of it, and by faith gets title to an abſolver from his debt and guilt. If it then be aſked, What is the thing whereby a ſinner is pardoned and juſtified, reconciled to God, and delivered from wrath, and healed? I anſwer, It is by believing in Jeſus Chriſt. If it be again aſked, What is the ground or reaſon, why the believing ſinner obtains that favour? I anſwer, Becauſe our Lord Jeſus hath ſufficiently ſatisfied for, and fully paid the debt of ſo many as are brought to believe on him. If it be *3dly* aſked, How comes it that Chriſt's ſatisfaction becomes a ranſom, and is accepted for ſuch and ſuch a believer? I anſwer, It is by virtue of the eternal covenant of redemption, or tranſaction made betwixt the Father and Son, wherein it was agreed, that his ſuffering and ſatisfying juſtice, ſhould be accepted for believing ſinners, as if themſelves had ſatisfied, according to that of, John vi. 39, 40. *This is the Father's will that ſent me, that of all that he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing; and this is the will of him that ſent me, that whoſoever ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting life.* So our believing is the firſt immediate ſtep, whereby we come to obtain pardon of ſin and peace with God: Chriſt's righteouſneſs or ſatisfaction, is that whereon our believing founds itſelf; yet ſo as it hath a reſpect to the eternal covenant of redemption, whence both Chriſt's ſatisfaction and our believing do flow, and without which we could have no warrant to expect righteouſneſs through a Mediator; for unleſs we know that Chriſt hath ſatisfied juſtice for elect ſinners that ſhall believe on him, we cannot reſt on him for righteouſneſs; and unleſs we have an eye to the covenant of redemption, we cannot expect that his ſatisfaction will be accepted for us. And therefore, if we will trace theſe ſteps back again, the firſt riſe of our ſalvation is in the council of God; the proſecution of it is in

Christ's satisfaction; and the application of his satisfaction is by our fleeing to it, and accepting of it by faith; and therefore we should learn in our looking and stepping up to heaven, to look to these three in this order; we should first begin at faith, and in believing we should consider Christ's satisfaction, and from that we should ascend to the rise of it, to wit, the covenant of redemption, and the terms of it; all which put together, give a very clear ground of expecting righteousness through Jesus Christ. I shall illustrate it by a scripture-similitude, wherein I shall shew you how all the three concur, yet so as there is a difference in their concurrence. Ye know that under the law there were *cities of refuge* appointed, which were types of Jesus Christ, in whom we find a shelter; in these cities of refuge, consider these three that concurred for saving the person that had committed manslaughter: 1. God's determination appointing such a thing, that the man-slayer being within such a city, should be safe from the avenger of blood; and this gave the rise to the other two that follow. 2. The city itself as a shelter or refuge to the man-slayer. 3. The persons fleeing or running to hide themselves in it. Now the safety of the person of the man-slayer did flow from all the three. 1*st*, The law appointing such a city, was the ground. 2*dly*, The city was the shelter. 3*dly*, The person's actual running to the city, gave him a claim and title to the privilege of the city; for though the former two had been, yet if he had not fled to the city, he had not obtained the benefit of safety: Even so, the believer that would be saved, is to consider these *three*, 1. God's determining such a way of salvation to elect sinners by a Mediator. 2. The Mediator privileged as the city of refuge for this end. And, 3. The sinner's fleeing to him, which is his believing on him, and his seeking and pleading for the benefit of Christ's satisfaction according to the terms of the covenant. Now, suppose a person

perſon to flee to the city of refuge, he is preſerved in it, juſtice cannot follow him further than the gates, becauſe he hath the benefit by God's determination and appointment of the city for ſuch an end; for he muſt flee into it ere he can plead for the benefit of the city. So, ſuppoſe a ſinner to be fled to Jeſus Chriſt by faith, he may plead for exemption from wrath, by God's determining and appointing a Mediator for ſuch an end; and the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt hath this privilege conferred on him, that he that thus flees unto him ſhall be ſafe; yet it is alſo ſuppoſed that ſuch a ſinner hath fled to him, elſe he could not expect ſafety through him, notwithſtanding God's determining the Mediator for ſafety. Thus we would have theſe three put together; and yet, as we ſaid, they differ; for God's determination is the efficient cauſe and fountain of all; Chriſt's ſatisfaction is the meritorious cauſe; and our believing is the ground on which we have right to plead for the benefit of his ſatisfaction; even as the man that fled to the city of refuge, his ſafety was not by any virtue in his running, but by God's determination, yet his running to the city was requiſite as the means; and except he run or fled to it, he could not plead for the benefit of the city; ſo our believing gives us ground to plead a right and title to Chriſt, and his ſatisfaction, without which we could not have that right.

But 2*dly*, Becauſe one will conceive this under one notion, and another under another: To clear it therefore a little further, we ſhall again conſider in the covenant theſe three ſteps. 1. The determination of it, as it is enacted in the council of the God-head, which in ſum is this, that ſuch and ſuch perſons ſhall be ſatisfied for by the Mediator, and his ſatisfaction accepted for them. 2. The execution of this covenant, where we take in all our Lord's ſufferings; all the ſtroaks and wounds that juſtice purſued him with, as ſurety for the elect; and God's accepting and juſ-

tifying of him, and declaring his accepting of him and being well satisfied with what he did and suffered by his raising him from the dead. 3. The application of his purchase by his accepted satisfaction, which consists in these. 1. That those that were given to Christ on this condition, that his satisfaction should stand good for them, should be justified and saved, that is, that in due time application of his satisfaction should be made to the persons given him to be saved by him; which takes in Christ's making intercession, that renewing grace, faith, &c. may be given to such persons. 2. That the work of the Spirit, who as the sanctifier, begets faith, and perswades to embrace Jesus Christ, shall be given them. Then 3. Follows the believer's actual coming to Christ, being sweetly and powerfully drawn to rest on him and his satisfaction; whereupon follows the application of the sentence of justification and absolution that results from the former: So that whereas it was before, *Cursed is he that continues not in all things written in the law:* Now it is, *He that believeth on Jesus Christ hath eternal life, and shall never come into condemnation:* All these go and agree well together. The covenant as the ground, Christ's satisfaction as the meritorious cause, and the application of his satisfaction by faith, which entitles and gives the believer a right to it.

The reason we have so much insisted on this, is, That we may teach you to join, (with respect to the covenant of redemption,) Christ's suffering, and your believing together; it will not be faith that will justify, that is, without respect to the covenant; neither will the covenant and Christ's satisfaction justify without faith; yet ye should so put them together, as the glory of salvation through grace may not lie on faith, but on God's everlasting love, and on Christ's satisfaction. And indeed it is no little practice for a soul sensible of sin, in the exercise of faith, so to lay the weight of its salvation on Christ and the covenant,

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as it neglects not running to Christ by faith; and so to lay hold on Christ by faith, as it lays not the weight on faith, but on Christ and the covenant. As in the comparison before used, suppose a man that had killed another unawares, had been taken before he ran to the city of refuge; God's determination was not the cause of that, but his not running, or his not coming at the city; so it may be, that some are apprehended by the justice of that God that are less sinful than others; yet the reason or cause is not in God's covenant, nor in Christ's want of worth, but in the persons not running, or not fleeing to Christ as to the city of refuge, and therefore they are not heard to plead for immunity by virtue of that satisfaction before the bar of God.

A 2*d*, Sort of *uses* are for exhorting and encouraging sinners to come to Christ: There is here then, 1. A clear ground to our faith, and a plain way opened to heaven, and a mighty encouragement to perswade sinners to lay hold on Christ, and to take this way for obtaining of life: This text opens, as it were, the gates of the city of refuge, and points out the way how to eschew the wrath which is to come: There is a way here laid down in the wisdom, justice, goodness and grace of God, which is made offer in the gospel; and since it is so, we beseech you that ye would not receive this grace in vain, but seeing there is a covenant well ordered and sure, a Mediator and a ransom provided, and a way laid down how to come to Christ by faith, let all of you who come under the conviction of sin and apprehension of wrath, step to and close with him, and plead for pardon by virtue of his wounds, and for healing through his stripes with respect to the covenant.

There are these *four* things here that will serve to give ground for this application, if we consider, 1. The great ground of faith that is here. 2. The great reason we have to make use of this ground. 3. The great

great encouragement we have so to do. And *4thly*, The great necessity we have to make this application. A little to each of these: But we shall premit one word to all, and it is this, that as there is a possibility of God's being reconciled, though for the present ye live at a distance from him, the use will by way of exhortation reach you? or if ye be brought to greater nearness under the sin of sense, and have some seriousness in seeking after God, it will reach you for consolation: In a word, we would exhort all; and it may convince some, and comfort others: But to the first thing we proposed, we declare and proclaim this as a true and faithful saying, that there is here an everlasting covenant, wherein the salvation of the elect is concluded through Christ's satisfaction to justice for them, and a way laid down for making peace betwixt God and all them that will thoroughly renounce their own righteousness, and lay hold on this satisfaction, even such a way as procures justification and healing to them: And for your confirmation consider in general, if it be possible that this covenant of redemption, the sufferings of the Mediator, and the promises made to believing, can be for nought; did the Father pursue the Surety so hotly for nothing? Or did the Surety pay such a ransom for nothing? No certainly, if it had not been to communicate pardon and peace, with healing by his wounds and stripes to them who were liable to condemnation, and under the dominion of sin, neither of these would have been: And therefore for grounds of your faith more particularly, see here, 1. A full satisfaction. God hath made way to sinners peace with himself, by satisfying himself fully in Christ the Mediator for the sins of elect believers, so that a sinner that in the sense of sin betakes himself to him, needs not to fear any after reckoning, because whatever might make for our peace, was fully laid on him, so that we may with holy and humble boldness say, That *we are not come to the mount that might*

might not be touched, nor to blackneſs, and darkneſs and tempeſt, and the ſound of a trumpet; but we are come unto mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling: Our invitation therefore to you, is not to bid you come and count for your own debt yourſelves, but to come and accept of Chriſt's payment of it, and of his ſatisfaction, whereby juſtice is completely ſatisfied. 2. See here as another ground of faith, the juſtice of God, not with reſpect to us, but to the bargain betwixt the Father and the Son, who are the principal parties, and we, to ſpeak ſo, but parties accidentally in this covenant, the covenant being primarily and mainly betwixt God and the Mediator. The juſtice of it appears in this, that it hath reſpect to a covenant which is fulfilled on all ſides, and therefore the elects believing and taking hold of the Mediator's ſatisfaction, cannot but be accepted as if he had payed the debt himſelf. The Father, to ſpeak ſo, had the diſpoſing of the bargain, and what ſatisfaction his juſtice was to receive, to his own mind; and as it was juſtice on the Son's ſide to ſatisfy according to his undertaking, ſo it is juſtice on the Father's ſide to pardon and be at peace with the ſinner that by faith flees unto Jeſus Chriſt. 3. See in this bargain not only juſtice, but mercy. As it is juſt, ſo it is a graciouſly free bargain; which is wonderful, and may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, if not paradoxal, yet it is nothing inconſiſtent with the way of grace; it is juſt that the Surety ſhould pay the debt, and yet that debt is moſt freely and frankly pardoned as to us: It is juſtice in the height as to the Mediator, but free grace as to us in the height; we come to it freely and without price, though it coſt him dear: And that is one of the Mediator's undertakings that it ſhould be free to his ſeed, John vi. 40. *This is the will of him that ſent me, that he who ſeeth the Son and believeth on him ſhould have eternal life.* 4. Conſider the reality

reality and ſureneſs of the bargain. It is ſuch as cannot fail, having ſuch pillars to lean on, the faithfulneſs of God engaged on juſt and equal terms, and the glory of God as the end; and having a moſt neceſſary and certain effect, to wit, healing to all to whom the ſovereign medicine is applied: This ſtability and ſureneſs of the covenant flows from God's engaging to the Mediator, and the Mediator's engaging to God; from the Mediator's ſatisfying, and the Father's accepting of his ſatisfaction, which being confirmed by the blood of the teſtator, it becomes a teſtament which cannot be anulled altered or changed. And if all this be ſo, let me put the queſtion, is there not good ground here to exhort the hearers of the goſpel to believe in Chriſt, and on believing to look for life through him; and a moſt ſolid ground laid down whereupon to build the hopes of eternal life? And therefore ſeeing this is the upſhot of all, that life is to be gotten freely by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, improve this way of ſalvation for making your peace, under no leſs certification than this, even as ye ſhould eſchew reckoning with divine juſtice in your own perſons for the leaſt farthing of your debt.

If it be *objected* here by any, 1. We are at enmity with God, and cannot ſatisfie: I *anſwer*, This text tells you that ſatisfaction is not fought from you, but from the Mediator who hath already given it, and the Father hath accepted it for all ſuch as ſhall by faith plead the benefit of it. 2. If ye ſhall ſay, we know not how to come to God, we are ſuch as cannot ſtep one foot forward, and ſo very ſinful and miſerable, that we know no ſuch tranſgreſſors and wretches as we are: I *anſwer*, Was it not for ſuch that the Mediator tranſacted, even for ſuch as we, tranſgreſſors, rebels, deſpiſers of him, and ſuch as judged him to be ſmitten and plagued of God? If he had been ſurety only for righteous people, there had been ſome reaſon for ſuch an objection; but it is for ſinners, for moſt heinous

nous sinners: Nay, this way of reasoning and pleading says on the matter, that Christ needed not have laid down his life. 3. If it be said, we are so sinful and backsliding, so filthy and polluted, that we think we are not within the reach of healing: I *answer*, this reasoning, if it were true, would be in effect to say, that ye are not within the reach of God's grace, and of Christ's satisfaction, which is not only injurious, but even blasphemous to the grace of God, and to the satisfaction of the Mediator; if your sin be ugly and horrible, he suffered horrible wrath; he was wounded, bruised, chastised, *&c.* 4. If it be said further, we can do nothing for ourselves, we cannot come to Christ, we know not what it is to believe, or if we can do any thing, alas, all our goodness is as the morning cloud and early dew that soon passeth away. I *answer*, The covenant is not transacted betwixt God and you, but betwixt God and the Mediator, and the ground of your peace, as to the procuring cause, depends on the Mediator's performing his part of the covenant in your name: and further, as for your believing, it is a piece of the Father's engagement to the Mediator, and must certainly be made as effectual as the Father must keep his word to the Son, according to those promises of the covenant, *I will put my law in their hearts, and write it in their minds, they shall all know me; and they shall be all taught of God:* And *thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, and the like: All these promises were in the covenant betwixt the Father and the Son; and the application of them is but their execution as to us; and therefore seeing such a city of refuge is cast open to man-slayers and transgressors, step humbly and boldly forward and run into it. There is yet a fifth *objection*, which some possibly will stick at, and it is this, we know not whether we shall believe or not, for we know not if we be in the covenant or not: I *answer*, would ye have thought that he who had com-

mitted man-ſlaughter would have reaſoned well if he had reaſoned thus; I know not if that city of refuge was appointed or built for me, and when the gates of it were caſt open ſhould ſtar to enter in it on this account? When it was told him that it was appointed for ſuch: Juſt ſo it is here: And ſuppoſe one ſhould ſay, I cannot believe, it is as if ſuch a man ſhould ſay, I cannot, I will not run to the city; nay, rather tho' he had been feeble, yet would he have creeped or not go to it as he could? even ſo here. In a word, a man ſhould not diſpute whoſe name is in the covenant, but ſhould ſtep forward to the ſhelter and refuge; as it is, Heb. vi. 18, 19. where the apoſtle borroweth the ſame ſimilitude, and ſays, 'God hath confirmed 'his promiſe by an oath, that by two immutable 'things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, 'we might have ſtrong conſolation who have fled for 'refuge to lay hold on the hope ſet before us.' Men in their natural condition are compared to the man-ſlayer, lying under the ſtroke of the law, or under the hazard of being purſued by the avenger of blood; Chriſt is compared to the city of refuge, and the heir of promiſe being purſued, what ſhall he do? Will his election ſimply ſave him? No, but he muſt flee unto Jeſus Chriſt as to his city of refuge: And therefore, by all means run and flee to him, as having this fear, leaſt the avenger of blood purſue and overtake you; and if ye cannot run ſo faſt as you would, yet run as ye can; and ye have this advantage, that the city of refuge is not far off, it is near you, even at your door, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. x. *The word is near thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart:* The lameſt amongſt you has Chriſt in your offer, that ye may enter into him, as into a city of refuge, and that he may come in and ſup with you; ſo that though ye cannot lift your feet ſo nimbly in running to him, if ye can but in good earneſt roll yourſelves upon him, ye ſhall be ſafe: Seeing then that this way of ſalvation is ſo full,

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so free, so equal and effectual, take heed least ye prejudge yourselves of it.

2*dly*, To press this yet a little further, consider what good reason ye have to run. Receive but this one word, ye are sinners lying under the curse and wrath of God, and have ye any other way of obtaining pardon, or of making your peace? And if ye believe that ye are sinners and under the curse, is there not need that ye should run to a shelter from it? If we were preaching to angels that had never sinned, there might be some reason for their slighting or laying little weight upon such a word of exhortation, but seeing ye are sinners, and liable to God's curse, why do ye slight a Saviour, having so much need of him?

3*dly*, Consider yet further, that ye have encouragement to run, and nothing to discourage you. What prejudice is in believing? There is no prejudice at all in this way, but many advantages; doubtless salvation will not fail them that believe. Yea, we may add from the words of the text, for encouraging to this, that the man or woman that is sensible of sin, and afraid of wrath, hath the covenant to look to, for begetting and carrying on the work of faith in them with power; for if it be true that all the means are in the covenant, as well as the end; and if we may lay stress on the covenant for the effect, to wit, the pardon of sin, and healing, then we may also lay hold on the covenant for furthering us to that effect. I speak not this as if people could of themselves act faith on the covenant, before faith be given them; but I speak it to encourage young beginners, that think they have no faith at all, that they may act what they have, and may look more and more to the covenant, to be enlightened, quickened, and strengthened, and that they may say with the poor man in the gospel, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief;* and with the spouse, Cant. i. *Draw me*, and *we will run after thee.*

4*thly*, And finally, for pressing of this, consider

the abſolute neceſſity that ye are under of making uſe of this way of ſalvation, of getting your peace made by Chriſt's ſatisfaction, and your wounds healed by his ſtripes; there is no other way, but either you muſt venture on a reckoning with God on your own ſcore, or accept of his ſatisfaction. There were never any covenants made by God with man but theſe two, a covenant of works for perfectly righteous people, by which covenant no ſinner was ever able to come to life; and a covenant of grace wherein Chriſt is made ſin for us; and as many as flee by faith unto him, are made the righteouſneſs of God through him; and therefore either betake yourſelves to this way, or reſolve to account with God yourſelves without a Mediator and Surety; or if you think it a fearful thing to account thus with God; and if it be certain, that many have been condemned for taking the way of works; let me earneſtly intreat you to welcome and make more uſe of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, for obtaining pardon of ſin, and peace with God: This way will do, when the other will quite fail you; but as for them who take this way, I will adventure to ſay in his name, that as certainly as Chriſt was ſmitten, as certainly ſhall pardon and healing come to them, even to as many as fly to him, and by believing lay hold on him. And on the other ſide, I ſay in the ſame name to all of you who take not this way of ſalvation, that ye ſhall moſt certainly be brought to reckon with God yourſelves without a Mediator, and to undergo his curſe according to the tenour of the covenant of works. Thus this text ſets before you life and death, God's bleſſing and God's curſe; life and God's bleſſing, if ye betake yourſelves to Chriſt, as to your alone city of refuge; and death and God's fearful curſe, if ye do it not. God himſelf make you wiſe to make the right choice!

SER-

SERMON XXV.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 6.

Verſe 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

YE have in the former verſes ſomewhat of our Lord's ſuffering, and of his ſuffering for ſinners, that he was wounded and bruiſed, *&c.* In this verſe the prophet proceeds to clear how this came to paſs, that Chriſt Jeſus was made to ſuffer for the elect, the ſeed that God had given him; which he doth by laying down the occaſion and fountain-cauſe whence it proceeded. 1. The occaſion of it in theſe words, *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray;* all the elect, as well as others, have wandered, and *every one of us has turned to our own way;* we had ſtripped ourſelves of all right and title to eternal life, and had made ourſelves liable to God's wrath and curſe through our ſinning. 2. The fountain-cauſe is, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;* when we had all ſtrayed, Jehovah took our Lord Jeſus, as the ſacrifices under the law were taken, and put him in our room, and laid on him the puniſhment due to us for our ſins, and actually purſued him for our debt.

So the words are an anſwer to that queſtion, How comes it to paſs that our Lord Jeſus ſuffered thus for ſinners? it is anſwered, The elect had made themſelves liable to the wrath and curſe of God, through their ſtraying; and to keep them from that wrath, God deſigned and provided his Son Jeſus Chriſt to be the Redeemer,

Redeemer, and according to the covenant of redemption laid on him the puniſhment due to them for their iniquities; in a word, their ſin, and God's appointing him to be Surety, made him liable to ſatisfie for all their debt.

The firſt part of the word holds forth our natural diſeaſe. The ſecond part holds forth God's gracious cure and remedy.

In the *firſt* part we have theſe three, 1. The natural ſtate and condition of all men and women, even of the elect themſelves (who are mainly to be looked on here) *all we have gone aſtray.* 2. This is illuſtrated by a ſimilitude, *We have gone aſtray like ſheep.* 3. It is amplified, *Every one of us hath turned to his own way.* Several words being put together to ſet forth the deſperate ſinful condition, whereinto the elect as well as others had brought themſelves.

1. Our natural ſtate and condition is ſet down in this word, *ſtraying.* To *ſtray*, is to wander out of the way, to go wrong, to be bewildered; for God hath ſet a rule to men to walk by in the way to life, the rule and way of holineſs; and whoever walk not in that way, do go aſtray, and wander out of the right way.

2. This is as I ſaid, illuſtrated by the ſimilitude of ſheep. The comparing of the elect to ſheep here is not at all to extenuate the ſinfulneſs of their ſtraying; tho' ſometimes the innocency of that creature in ſome other compariſons is inſinuated; but it is to hold forth the ignorance, ſpiritual blindneſs, and brutiſhneſs of their ſtraying; the ſcripture uſually pointing out that beaſt to be diſpoſed and given to wandring; and both nature and experience tells us, that in a wilderneſs where there is greateſt hazard, they are readieſt to run into danger, ſuch is their ignorant and fooliſh inclination; juſt ſo are the elect by nature.

3. It is amplified by this, *That every one hath turned to his own way.* Before, it was collectively ſet down

down, *All we have gone astray;* but now lest any should extol himself, it is distributively set down, *Every one*, even Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others such, not one excepted. This *turning to our own way* holds forth two things, *1st*, It is called our own way, to distinguish it from God's way, as it is, Psal. lxxxi. 11. *He gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels;* that is, in their own inventions, or according to their own will, humour, and inclination. *2dly*, While it is said, that *every one* turns to his own way, it is to shew us, that beside the common way that all sinners have to turn away from God, distinguished from God's way, every sinner hath his own particular and peculiar way, whereby in his way he is distinguished from another sinner. There is but one way to heaven, but many ways to hell, and every one hath his different way; some have one predominant lust, some another, but they all meet here, that every one takes a wrong way of his own.

Considering the scope, we shall shortly and passingly hint at two general *observations*, whereof the *1st* is this, that it contributes much for peoples conceiving and considering of Christ's sufferings aright; people ought to conceive and consider of Christ's sufferings aright, and be well acquainted with their own sinful nature and disposition. Men will never look rightly on Christ's sufferings, nor suitably esteem him, nor make him, and the doctrine that holds him and his sufferings forth cordially welcome, except they have some sense of their sinful nature and disposition. Hence it was that many of the Pharisees and hypocrites of that time, wherein the Lord exercised his ministry amongst the Jews, never made him welcome, nor prized his sufferings; whereas among the publicans and sinners many were brought to believe in him.

Not to insist on the *use* of this, only in a word, see here a main reason why Jesus Christ is so meanly thought of, and the report of his suffering is so little entertained

entertained and esteemed, even because so few walk under the due sense of this, that like lost sheep they have gone astray.

The 2*d* general *observation* from the scope, putting both parts of the verse together is this, that we should never look on Christ's sufferings but with respect to the covenant of redemption, and God's transacting with him as our surety; therefore the last part comes in, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all;* for albeit we know that Christ hath suffered much; yet if there be not an eye to, and some acquaintance with the covenant, the rise of his sufferings, and God's hand and end in his sufferings, it will be to no purpose; therefore when Peter is to speak of his sufferings, Acts ii. 23. He premits these words, *Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God*, and then subjoins his being crucified: Looking on Christ's sufferings with respect to the covenant. 1. It lets us know that Christ's sufferings came not by guess but by the eternal counsel of God, and by virtue of that transaction betwixt the Father and the Son, and this takes away the scandal off them, which the prophet sets himself here to remove. 2. It gives faith access to make use of his sufferings when we look to him as purposely designed for this end. 3. It holds out the love of God, Father, Son, and Spirit, towards elect sinners, That whosoever God looked angry like on the Mediator, as personating them, and sustaining their room; yet that Jehovah had the devising and designing of these sufferings, and that he sent his Son to suffer thus, it holds forth wonderful love.

3. And more particularly, from the first part of the words, which is the main thing to be marked, *Observe*, That all men, even the elect themselves not excepted, are naturally in a most sinful and desperate state and condition; so that if ye would know what they are by nature, this is a description of their state,

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All we, like sheep, have gone astray, and every one hath turned to his own way; and when it is called *our own way*, there needs no other epithet to set forth the desperateness of it. That which I mean is this, that all men are naturally under these two, *1st*, They are under guilt before God, Eph. ii. 1, 2. *Dead in sins and trespasses, children of wrath, and heirs of condemnation*, liable to the curse of God by virtue of the covenant which Adam broke. *2dly*, Which is mostly aimed at here, there is in every one a sinful nature, a sinfulness or sinning sin, and inclination to sin, every one hath a straying humour; so that although the similitude of sheep agree not to them in that sense, for sheep are innocent creatures, yet it agrees to them in this sense, that they are silly foolish creatures; and in this respect it is said, Gen. vi. 5. That *all the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart in man are only evil continually;* and Eph. ii. 1. They are said to be *dead in sin*, not only in respect of their being obnoxious to God's curse, but in respect of the natural deadness of their sinful nature, and want of spiritual life. So Rom. iii. 9, 10. and forwards, the apostle describes the sinfulness of man's nature at large, not only in respect of its guilt, but of its inclination to sin, and says that *their throat is an open sepulchre;* insinuating thereby, that men naturally are like to a tomb, and that the corpse within the tomb is death and sin, and that all that comes from them savours of that; *their feet are swift to shed blood, with their tongues they use deceit*, &c. Every member and part of the body, and every faculty of the soul is bent to that which is evil. These three may further confirm it. 1. If we look in general to what the scripture speaks of men by nature, Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. Rom. iii. and v. they being, as it is, Isa. lvii. penult, *as the raging sea that casts out dirt and mire continually;* it is always moving and working one way or another, and more especially in a storm; so that though at one tide ye should sweep the shore

never ſo clean, it will be as foul and dirty the next tide that cometh; ſo are theſe hearts of ours, (as Peter ſpeaks, 2 Epiſt. ii. and Jude ver. 23.) *foaming out their own ſhame.* And James ſaith, chap. iv. 5. *The ſpirit that dwells in us luſteth to envy;* it hath as great eagerneſs after, and as great delight in ſin, as a drunkard hath after drinking. 2. Experience alſo confirms it, if you conſider all the men and women that ever were in the world (our bleſſed Lord Jeſus being excepted, as not deſcending from Adam by the ordinary way of generation) and that will be found true which the apoſtle hath, Rom. iii. *There is none that doeth good, no not one;* And that which is ſpoken, Gen. vi. *All fleſh hath corrupted their way.* And what is the ſpring of all the abominations that are in the world, and the riſe of theſe particular evils that are in believers and ſaints mentioned in ſcripture, as in David, Peter, and others; but this ſame corrupt nature, this body of death, as it is called, Rom. vii. 14? All which ſtrongly prove a fire to be within, when there is ſuch a ſmoke without. 3. We may confirm it from well-grounded reaſon; for it cannot be otherwiſe; if the root be of ſuch a nature, can the branches be otherwiſe? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing? No, not one, Job xiv. 4. when Adam fell, the root was corrupted, and the branches cannot be freſh; the fountain was defiled, and the ſtream cannot be clean and clear. Hence when Adam begot Seth, an elect in whom the church was continued, it is ſaid, that *he begot a ſon after his own likeneſs*, Gen. v. He himſelf was created after God's image, but begat children after his own image.

Though this be a commonly received doctrine, yet it is not without good reaſon inſiſted on ſo much here and in other ſcriptures; we ſhall therefore ſpeak a little to theſe four *uſes* of it.

The *1ſt uſe* of it ſerves for information; and we may make it a looking-glaſs wherein we may ſee clearly

ly our own moſt ſinful ſtate and condition. Would ye know what ye are by nature? This text tells you, that not only all men have ſtrayed, but that each of us, or *every one of us hath turned to his own way;* but knowing how ready we are to ſhift the challenge, we ſhould be perſuaded that we are by nature liable to God's curſe for Adam's ſin, dead in ſin, and inclined to all evil, ſheep are not readier to go the wrong way, and will not more readily ſtray if they want a ſhepherd, than we are inclined to do. There is a common word in many of your mouths, that we are all ſinners by nature; but when it is ſearched into, we find that there is much ignorance among you of what it means; many count themſelves to be ſinners, only becauſe of their being guilty of the firſt ſin, and ſo put no difference betwixt the firſt ſin and original ſin, which is an effect that flows from, and follows upon the firſt ſin: The firſt ſin was Adam's deed, and is legally ours, being imputed to us; as it is, Rom. v. *Death reigned over all, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion;* becauſe Adam in his ſtanding and falling ſtood in our room, repreſenting all mankind that was to come of him: But original ſin is inherent in us, and cleaveth cloſe to us, and is that which we are born in, and grows up with us; and therefore ye ſhould diſtinguiſh theſe things, that ye may know that ye are not only guilty of Adam's firſt ſinful deed, but that ye have a preſent ſinful and corrupt nature, though it be not always alike exerciſing and acting itſelf. Others again look only upon their nature as inclined to evil, and look not on it as that which makes them liable to wrath, by reaſon of the firſt ſin; but ye ſhould put them both together, and know that your ſinfulneſs doth not conſiſt only in an inclination to evil, but your ſinfulneſs lies mainly in the bias that is in you, and ſo naturally leads you out of the way; and it is not only our actual ſtraying and going wrong

that ye ſhould take notice of, but alſo and mainly of our ſinful nature that inclines, diſpoſes, and ſets us on work to go wrong; it is our filthy corrupt nature, the body of death, the ſmell and ſavour whereof, to ſay ſo, is the appearance of ſome actual ſin. We may clear it in a ſimilitude or two; we are by this original ſin as young ſerpents before they can ſting actually; or like ravenous birds before they come out of the neſt, yet we call theſe ſerpents and ravenous birds, becauſe they are come of ſuch a kind. In our ſwadling-clothes we have the venomous and ravenous nature, to wit, original ſin in us; and in our actual ſinning we are like ſerpents when they come to ſting actually, or like ravenous birds when they come to catch the prey; and our actual ſin is a fruit of original ſin: Or take it in the ſimilitude in the text, there are many ſheep that never actually ſtrayed; yet they are called ſtraying ſenſeleſs creatures, becauſe they are inclined to ſtray, and ready to ſtray; or take it in this ſimilitude, there are ſome diſeaſes that follow ſuch a houſe and family, ſome are inclined to a conſumption, ſome to the ſtone, ſome to one diſeaſe, ſome to another, which is from ſome defect of the body; even ſo it is here, that from a defect of our nature, infected by original ſin, all actual ſins flow.

The *2d uſe* is for conviction and reproof; and indeed we cannot well tell where we ſhall begin here: However, the firſt thing that it reproves, is our natural pride; though this be the ſinfulneſs of our very infancy, yet we are ready to look upon ourſelves as ſomething. It is a true ſaying, though much miſapplied, that Job hath, chap. xi. 12. *Vain man would be wiſe, though man be born as a wild aſs's colt;* a *colt*, he hath a wild humour, and is the moſt witleſs of creatures; and this ſame is it that is implied in that ſaying of James iv. 5. *Do ye think the ſcripture ſaith in vain, the ſpirit that is in us luſteth to envy;* which ſaith this much, that the moſt part never think that they have ſuch

ſuch a ſpirit in them that is inclined to all evil, bent to hate God and every thing that is good. 2. It reproves the great ſecurity that is amongſt the moſt part. If this be a truth, that men and women are thus born under the curſe of God, and inclined to every thing that is evil, born enemies to God, and enclined to aggravate and heighten the quarrel; how comes it then to paſs, that the greateſt part of men ſleep as ſoundly and ſecurely as if they were in no hazard? If ye were all poſed and put to it, how many of you can give a ſolid proof that ye are reconciled, that your peace is made, that ye are changed and your nature renewed, and the quarrel betwixt God and you taken away? and yet if we look up and down, ye are generally as ſecure and quiet as if ye were born friends with God. There are but few taken with a conviction, but many are ſaying within themſelves, Is yonder doctrine true of me? as if the ſcripture had ſpoken in vain whatever it ſpeaks of original ſin. Ah! ſhall never this be amended? Will you never lay your ſinfulneſs to heart? Will ye ſtill think nothing of that which gave the occaſional riſe to the covenant of redemption, and to Chriſt's ſatisfaction? All the preaching that ye hear daily, if it be not now laid to heart, it ſhall be moſt terrible and dreadful to you one day; and the peace that ye now have ſhall end in red war and great bitterneſs. 3. It reproves peoples exceeding great unwatchfulneſs, and their truſting to their own nature, and following their own counſel. The wiſe man ſaith, Prov. xxviii. 26. *He that truſteth in his own heart is a fool.* Is it not reproof worthy, for a man to be as brutiſh as the very beaſt that periſheth; as it is, Pſal. xlix. and yet to be as little watchful, and truſt as much to a man's own guiding, as if nothing of a miſguiding humour and diſpoſition were in him? We may more than allude to thoſe words of our Saviour here, *If the blind lead the blind, ſhall not both fall into the ditch?* Many of you think that ye are inſtructed

inſtructed as ſcribes in the way to heaven; and will be ready to ſay, God forbid we ſhould be ignorant of that, and what have we been doing all our days, if we be yet to learn that leſſon? But we muſt tell you what ye have been doing, ye have been like ſenſeleſs ſheep ſtraying all your days: And we would the rather ſpeak to this, becauſe it is ſo neceſſary to be known and believed, and yet ſo little credited; for, 1. Ye will never be rightly humbled, nor make uſe of Jeſus Chriſt, nor walk watchfully and ſoberly; in a word, ye will never believe and repent, till ye know, be convinced of, and believe this to be your natural inclination, and the ſinfulneſs of your nature. And yet, 2. Tho' this be ſo neceſſary that the want of it mars the fruit of the word in you, and ſermons do but harden you; how many are there that are as little ſenſible of it as the very ſtones of the wall that are before us, or the boards that they lean upon? As to your own particular ſtate and condition, I would but aſk you, Is it poſſible that ye could live ſo ſecurely, and ſatisfied with your own caſe, if ye believed indeed that ye had ſuch a ſinful nature, and that ye were liable to God's wrath and curſe? Or would ye give ſuch way to your natural ſinful humours and inclinations, and ſo contentedly ſlight Jeſus Chriſt, and the offers of the goſpel, as many of you do? And yet we ſee amongſt them with whom we converſe men and women not only as ſecure, as if they had no ſuch natures, but are even belching and foaming out their out their own ſhame. We would have you therefore to be convinced and know, that not only ye are ſinners in the general, but that every one of you is ſuch in particular.

To make it the more clear, I ſhall give you two or three qualifications that are requiſite to a ſuitable conviction of your ſinfulneſs. 1. Be particular. 2. Ye ſhould be ſenſible, and not only in words acknowledge that ye are ſinners, but ye ſhould ſee and be convinced,

ced, that in this and this ye have sinned, and ye should be kindly affected with it. 3. It should be distinct, not a guessing, but a thing that from the seeing and feeling of it ye should be clear in. 4. It should have such influence on the moving of your affections, and such an inward working on your hearts, as that ye may loath your nature, and yourself because of it. We may see all these in Paul, Rom. vii. 10. and forward, who tho' he was greatly renewed, yet saith he, *I see a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind:* He feels and is very sensible of that which leads him into captivity, and he cries out, *Who shall deliver me?* &c. his affections are mightily stirred with it, *What I do, I allow not*, &c. *O miserable man that I am*, &c. If ye believe this to be a truth, and that Paul lived in the faith and feeling of it; then judge if there be not just ground to expostulate with most part of you, as being yet without the faith and feeling of that which so much concerns you.

The 3d *use* of it serves wonderfully to set forth the glory of the free and rich grace of God, that all this design is founded, and this transaction entered into; so that Christ comes to satisfy, and doth actually satisfy justice for a number of such wretches that had gone astray like lost sheep. This comes in as the scope; we have strayed and done the wrong, but he hath paid the debt, and satisfied for the wrong done: And from comparing this verse with the foregoing, we may take these five considerations that serve to heighten the glory of God's grace and free-love, and to shame believers, that are so little wondring at it. 1. Who is he that is smitten? His own Son; we sinned, and he was smitten, even he who was and is the Father's fellow, the sword awakes against him, and we go free. 2. What did our Lord suffer? *He was wounded and bruised, the chastisement of our peace was on him, he laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Christ's sufferings were not in shew or pretence; for he was arraigned

arraigned before the tribunal of juſtice, and did really pay our debt, and ſatisfy juſtice for our ſins. 3. Who exacted this ſatisfaction? Who did ſmite him? It is the Lord Jehovah, it is the Father, which makes the glory of grace ſhine the more; it is God the Father whoſe heart was tender to the Son of his love that exacts the full price of him; ſo that as he ſaid of Abraham, *By this I know that thou lovedſt me, becauſe thou haſt not with-held thy ſon, thine only ſon Iſaac from me;* we may ſay, By this we know God's love to the elect, when he hath not with-held, nor ſpared his own Son from them, but hath laid on him the iniquities of them all. 4. For whom did he ſmite him? It was for ſinners, for ſtraying ſheep, for covenant-breakers, for ſuch as had gone a-whoring from God, and were bent to ſin againſt him, I mean the elect. 5. When was it that he ſuffered for them? Even when they were ſtraying, rejecting, deſpiſing, and nodding the head at him, ſpitting in his face, and ſaying, Away with him, even then he is praying and dying for them: Now put all theſe together, that ſuch a price ſhall be exacted of ſuch a ſurety, and for ſuch ſinners, and at ſuch a time, behold and ſee therein how God commends his love to us, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. v. 8. *In that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us*; when we were in our ſin, not praying to him, nor in a capacity to pray or give him thanks for any thing that he did or ſuffered, he then died for us: Is there any thing here but freedom of grace? And does not this exceeding highly commend the love of God, that he exacts the debt due by us of his Son, and the powerful love of the Mediator and Surety, that at ſuch a time and for ſuch tranſgreſſions he ſhould pay ſuch a price?

Uſe 4. Seeing this was our ſtate that we were *ſinners*, and yet herein was the love of God commended, that he laid on his Son the iniquity of us all, is there not

not then good ground to take with the ſin, and to make uſe of the remedy, to take with ſin and to cloſe with Chriſt? We might take occaſion here to exhort, 1. To watchfulneſs, and to walk ſoberly and humbly, from this conſideration, that we have ſuch a nature. 2. To exhort every one to repentance, becauſe by nature ye are all in ſuch a ſinful ſtate and condition; it may be ground of exerciſing repentance, even long after your juſtification, and peace made with God who are juſtified, with whom it ſhould be as we ſee it was with David. But *3dly*, Seeing by nature ye are under God's wrath and curſe, and in a ſtate of enmity with him, it mainly ſerves to exhort you to flee unto Jeſus Chriſt, and not to reſt till ye get the quarrel taken away; it might be in reaſon thought that people would be ſoon and eaſily induced to this, even to run unto Jeſus Chriſt, and to welcome the goſpel with good will, for preventing the curſe and wrath due to them for ſin, and for ſubduing of this ſinful nature and inclination to ſtray from God and his way: Therefore ſeeing there is a fountain opened to the houſe of David for ſin and for uncleanneſs, ſince there is a ſatisfaction given to juſtice for removing the guilt of ſin, and ſince the Spirit is purchaſed for mortifying of ſin, and for making you holy; let as many as think that they have gone aſtray, and have turned to their own way, as they would not be found ſtill at this diſtance with God, make uſe of Chriſt for making their friendſhip with God; it is the word that Peter uſeth, 1 Pet. ii. ult. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, but we are now turned unto the Shepherd and Biſhop of our ſouls;* hold, O hold you near this Shepherd, and make uſe of his righteouſneſs for making your peace: If we could rightly underſtand the words, we would ſee in them, 1. A motive to put us on believing in Chriſt, and can there be a greater motive than *neceſſity?* We have ſinned and gone aſtray, he is the only Saviour, there is no other name given un-

der heaven whereby ſinners can be ſaved. 2. There is alſo in them an encouragement to believing: It was for ſinners, ſuch as we are, that Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered all that he ſuffered, which may be ground of hope and encouragement to ſtep forward, and if neither our need, nor Chriſt's being a Saviour, and willing to make ſinners welcome will prevail, we know not what will do it: It will turn to this, and ye will be put to the queſtion, are ye ſinners? and if ſinners, is it not a deſperate thing to lie under ſin and wrath? If ye be not ſinners, we have no warrant to propoſe this doctrine to you, to invite or make you welcome to a Saviour; but if ye grant that ye are ſinners, will ye contentedly lie under ſin? will ye be able to bear it out againſt God? or think ye that ye will be well enough for all that; and if ye dare not reſolve to lie under ſin, I would aſk, what way will ye avoid it? Think ye it eaſy to win from under it? muſt not the juſtice of God be ſatisfied? Some of you think that ye can pray yourſelves out of ſin; but if ſo, what need was there of Chriſt's ſufferings, if a ſatisfaction might have been made another way? And if none but Chriſt can ſatisfy its demands, I exhort you, that by all means ye would make uſe of him, elſe ye will moſt certainly drown and die in your ſins: And this is the thing that we would commend to you, that under the ſenſe of ſin, and in the faith of God's condeſcending love, ye would flee to Jeſus Chriſt, and give him employment for making your peace with God, and taking away your ſin and ſanctifying of your nature: O but this be ſuitable to ſinners; and if ye think yourſelves ſinners, prejudge not yourſelves of the benefit of a Saviour.

SER-

SERMON XXVI.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 6.

Verſe 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

EVERY expreſſion that the prophet uſeth to ſet forth the grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt to ſinners, is more wonderful than another, becauſe indeed every thing that he expreſſeth is more wonderful than another: And there is ſo much grace and infinite love in the way of the goſpel, that it is hard to know where there is moſt of it; whether in its riſe, or its execution; whether in the decree of God, or in Chriſt's ſatisfaction; whether in the benefits that we enjoy, or in the way by which we are brought to enjoy them: Sure all together make a wonder ſurpaſſingly great, yea, a moſt wonderful wonder, even a world of wonders: It is a wonder (as it is in the 5th verſe) that he ſhould *be wounded for our tranſgreſſions, bruiſed for our iniquities;* that *the chaſtiſement of our peace ſhould be on him,* and that *by his ſtripes we ſhould be healed:* And when he comes here to explain this, and to ſhew how it came to paſs that Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered ſo much, he holds forth another new wonder: *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray,* &c. As if he had ſaid, would ye know how it comes to paſs that the Mediator behoved to ſuffer, and ſuffer ſo much? The anſwer is clear: All we, the elect people of God had gone aſtray like ſo many wandering ſheep, as well as others, not one excepted; and there was no other way to recover and

reclaim us but this, *The Lord Jehovah laid on him the iniquity of us all:* To recover us when we were loſt, Jeſus Chriſt was ſubſtituted in our room by the eternal decree of God, and the iniquities of us all who are his elect people, as to their puniſhment, were laid upon him. This then is the ſcope to ſhew the riſe of Chriſt's ſufferings, and how it came to paſs that our Lord ſuffered, and ſuffered ſo much, the occaſion of it was the elects ſin, and the fountain cauſe, the Father's laying of their ſin on him by an eternal decree, and making him to anſwer for it according to that decree, for his undertaking, which was the covenant of redemption, whereof Chriſt's ſuffering was the execution. Thus we have the fountain whence our Lord's ſufferings flowed: He is in the covenant of redemption ſubſtituted and judicially enacted the elects Surety, and takes on him their debt; and being ſubſtituted in their room, juſtice purſues the claim, and ſentence paſſes againſt him and makes him anſwerable and liable to the debt of their ſins; which ſets forth, as it were, a judge on the throne, Jehovah, and two parties at the bar, *us* and *him*; us the principal debtors, and him the Surety, Jeſus Chriſt in our room and place; the law by which the judge proceeds is the covenant of redemption; and we the principal debtors not being able to pay, he is made liable to the debt, and on this ground the ſentence paſſes againſt him for ſatisfying what we were owing; and hereupon followed his ſufferings: So then the riſe of his ſufferings is, that it was ſo tranſacted by the wiſe, juſt, and gracious God: And thus this verſe comes well in to explain and further to clear what he aſſerted in the former verſe. Though the words be few, yet they are the compend and ſum of the goſpel: How therefore to ſpeak of them, ſo as to unfold them aright, is not eaſy: And becauſe the devil who ſeeks by all means to mar the beauty of the goſpel, doth moſt fiercely aſſault where moſt of its beauty ſhines, and hath

hath therefore ſtirred up ſeveral ſorts of enemies to wreſt theſe words, and to obſcure the beauty of grace that may be clearly ſeen in them; we ſhall a little open the few words that are in this laſt part of the verſe, *And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; having ſpoken to the former part of it laſt day.

In theſe few words then, we have, 1. Something ſpoken of iniquity, which three parties have ſome acts about, to wit, 1. The elect, *us all.* 2. *Him*, to wit, the Mediator. 3. The *Lord*, to wit, Jehovah: Then we have the expreſs act of the Lord, to wit, his laying on him the Mediator, the iniquity of us all. 1. As for this word *iniquity*, by it is meant ſometimes, 1. Sin formally taken as it hath a diſconformity to the law of God, and ſuppoſeth a ſpot and defect, and ſo it is commonly taken when we pray for pardon of ſin; as when David ſays, Pſal. li. *My ſin is ever before me;* And Pſal. xxxviii. *My iniquity is gone over my head:* And ſo it is the tranſgreſſion of the law of God. 2. It is ſometimes taken for the effect that ſin procureth, and ſo it is in effect the puniſhment of ſin, as Lev. vii. the 18th and 20th verſes being compared together: verſe 18. it is ſaid, *He ſhall bear his iniquity*, which verſe 20. is, *He ſhall be cut off*, and ſo it is clearly meant of the puniſhment of iniquity; for *to bear his iniquity*, and to *be cut off*, are the ſame thing there. And that word of Cain, Gen. iv. 14. *My iniquity* or puniſhment *is greater than I can bear*, hath a manifeſt reſpect to God's curſe inflicted on him for his ſin, and is, as if he had ſaid, I ſhall not be able to live under the puniſhment that is inflicted upon me, for every one that finds me will ſlay me; and ſometimes it is tranſlated *puniſhment*, as in that of Gen. iv. 13. The queſtion then is this, which of theſe two is underſtood here in this text, whether iniquity or ſin formally taken, or iniquity taken for the puniſhment thereof? Thoſe who are called Antinomians plead, that it is to be underſtood of ſin formally taken: But though it be

be abſurd ſo much as to mention this, it being ſo blaſphemous-like to aſſert, that our bleſſed Lord Jeſus ſhould be formally a ſinner, and have the ſpots and defilement of ſin on him, which we wonder that any Chriſtian ſhould dare to aſſert or preſume to maintain; yet becauſe this ſcripture is alledged for it, we ſhall clear, that iniquity is not here to be taken for ſin formally, but for ſin in the puniſhment of it. And the *firſt* reaſon that we give, ſhall be drawn from the plain ſcope of the words. The prophet having in the 5th verſe ſaid, That *he was wounded for our trrnſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquities*; the ſcope of this verſe is to ſhew how it came to paſs that Chriſt ſuffered, and ſuffered ſo much; which he doth by declaring that it could not be otherwiſe, becauſe the puniſhment of all the ſins of the elect was laid upon him; and that which was called *wounding* and *bruiſing* in the former verſe is here called *a bearing of their iniquities*, (for if they were laid on him, he did certainly bear them) the ſins of all the elect met on him as to their Puniſhment: And this ſhews how that Chriſt behoved to ſuffer all that he ſuffered: So in the 8th verſe it is ſaid, *He was cut off out of the land of the living and for the tranſgreſſions of my people was he ſtricken:* That which is here called the *bearing of iniquity*, is there called *being cut off and ſtricken for the tranſgreſſions of his people:* And this may ſerve for the ſecond reaſon of the expoſition, as we have given it; becauſe when iniquities are ſpoken of, they are not called Chriſt's, as inherent in him, but they are called his peoples iniquities, they being formally theirs, but his judicially and legally only: Even as the debt is formally the bankrupt's, but legally the ſurety's. A third reaſon is drawn from comparing this text with other parallel places of ſcripture. That which is called bearing of iniquity here, is called, Gal. iii. 13. His *being made a curſe for us*, ſo that his bearing of our iniquity, is his being made a curſe for our iniquity

quity, and his bearing the wrath of God due to us for our ſin. I ſhall illuſtrate it by a compariſon, whence the fourth reaſon will clearly reſult, our iniquities became Chriſt's as his righteouſneſs becomes ours; for theſe two are parallel, 2 Cor. v. ult. *He was made ſin for us who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God, in*, or *through him*; where, 1. It is clear, that Jeſus Chriſt is ſo the ſinner in our room, as we are righteous in his room; and contrarily we are righteous in his room, as he was the ſinner in our room. 2. That righteouſneſs is not ſo derived to us that it is formally made ours, and to be inherently in us, but it is ours only by imputation, itſelf or the virtue of it being imputed to us: And it is upon this ground that Rom. iv. *imputed righteouſneſs* is often mentioned, that is, when God accounteth a a man to be righteous, though he be yet a ſinner in himſelf; even ſo our ſin is imputed to Chriſt and reckoned his, becauſe he became our Surety: And tho' Antinomiâns have a vain notion to evade this, yet the ſcripture is very clear, as holding forth a legal procedure; the debt is accounted his, becauſe of his obligation to be anſwerable for it, and in juſtice and law he is liable to it. And there is no other way that we can rationally imagine, how our bleſſed Lord can bear our iniquities; for, 1. It cannot ſtand with his abſolute purity to have any ſpot of ſin, or to be formally the ſinner; neither, 2. Is it neceſſary that he ſhould be the ſinner, but only that he ſhould pay the penalty due by us, it being the nature of contracts among men, that where the principal debtor fails, the ſurety comes in his room, ſo is it here. Yea, 3. If Jeſus Chriſt were the ſinner formally, it would incapacitate him to be our ſurety, to pay the penalty, or to ſatisfy juſtice for the debt of our ſins: We would not have ſpoken ſo much to this, were it not that this ſame place is preſſed in a moſt ſtrenuous manner by the abuſers of the grace of God to maintain their error.

ror. So then we take this in short to be the meaning of this part of the verse, that Jesus Christ did bear the punishment due to us for our sins.

2*dly*, The three parties that have some acts about iniquity, are, 1. *Us all.* 2. *Him.* 3. *The Lord Jehovah.* 1. *Us all*, and here we meet with the Arminians, another party that abuse and pervert this place, as if it were to be extended to all men and women that ever sinned or went astray; For, say they, it is the iniquity of all them that sinned that is laid on Christ, and that is the iniquity of all men and women in the world: But, as we shewed before, the scope of the words is not so much to shew the universality of all men and womens sinning, as to shew that all the elect as well as others, have gone astray, and turned every one of them to their own way, therefore it is restricted, *All we;* and the word *all* is no broader than the word *we*, now the *we* that is here meant, is the *we*, who in the former words are *healed by his stripes*; and that sure is not all men and women that sin, but the elect only: And verse 11. it is they *that by his knowledge*, that is, by faith in him, *are justified*; it is these *all* whose iniquities he bare, and no more: So that in short, *us all* is not all men simply considered, but *us all*, that are elect. And thus it is necessarily to be restricted to the prophet's scope.

The meaning of both parts of the verse together then is, that *we all*, even the elect as well as others, *have gone astray*, *and turned every one of us to his own sinful way*, and the Lord Jehovah made him to bear the punishment of all our sins, and it could not but be a mighty great punishment, and a most huge and horrible suffering, when the Lord made the iniquities of *us all*, his elect to meet upon Christ.

There is not much debate about the other two parties, the first whereof is *him*, that is the Mediator Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the eternal Father, *the brightness of the Father's glory*, *and the express image of*

of his person, who being God, became man, to perform and bring about the work of our redemption according to his undertaking.

The other party is the Lord Jehovah, the Judge and the party offended; as we are the party offending, and Jesus Christ the Satisfier. And the Lord is here considered essentially as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, having one common essence and justice, and who being all three one God, are to be satisfied, he is Jehovah.

But how is this punishment of our iniquities laid on Jesus Christ? And here Socinians make as great a bustle and stir; the devil intending (if he could effect it) to blow up the very foundation of the gospel, bends all his forces against such places as do hold it forth most lively; but the words are clear, and most significant as they are rendered according to the Hebrew in the margin, thus, *The Lord hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him;* the iniquities of the elect are so many brooks and rivulets of water, any one of which is hard and difficult for them to pass over. But O! when Christ comes to satisfy for them, they are brought and gathered into a great lake, or rather into a vast sea or ocean together; they are all collected and combined to meet on him, and he did meet with them in a mighty shock, and sure they could not but be great sufferings that he endured when he had such a sea to pass through; or the sins of the elect were like so many companies or regiments of men, any one whereof they could never have overcome, but when Christ came to satisfy divine justice for them, all the companies and regiments of sins, so to speak, rendezvouzed, and were brought into one formidable army together to meet on Christ: The word is well rendered here, *were laid on him*, being the same word in the root that Saul used when he commanded Doeg to fall upon the Lord's priests, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. the word is, *Lay upon them*, or *lay at them;* as when one is an-

gry with another, he will cry, *Fall upon him*; and this shews the exceeding greatness of Christ's sufferings, when all the sins of all the elect met together as a huge and heavy host to fall and do terrible execution upon our blessed Lord Jesus. This then being the meaning of the words, the question is, Whether the Lord Jehovah did lay this punishment really upon Christ; or whether, as Socinians fondly imagine, he only interceeded for them? But for *answer*, 1. What sort of meaning of the words would that be, I pray? The Lord made the iniquities of us all to interceed on him, when the text says plainly, that *they were laid on him*, and on the matter that he bare them, and expressly so, ver. 11. *For he shall bear their iniquities.* Yea, 2. Consider the scope, and it comes in as a reason why Christ suffered so much. And would that, can any think, be a good reason for so great and grievous sufferings undergone by Christ, that God made him to intercede for all the sins of the elect? But if you look upon the words in their true meaning, they are a clear reason why he was wounded, and exceedingly bruised and chastened, and why he endured so many stripes, even because all the sins of all his elect met on him, because he was made to bear the punishment of them all; also the words following clear it, *He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken*; and Gal. iii. *He was made a curse for us.* He suffered, *the just for the unjust*; he actually and really suffered that which we should have suffered. If it be asked, What is this, *to lay iniquity on Christ?* Or how is it said, that the iniquity of the elect *was laid on him?* Or in what respect? I answer, 1. In respect of God's eternal covenant; the punishment due for our sins was laid upon him by an eternal deliberate counsel or consultation of the persons of the Godhead; wherein, as we shewed before, Christ enters Surety for us, accepts of, and engages to pay our debt. 2. In respect of God's actual pursuing Christ,

Chriſt, having thus engaged himſelf, and ſo putting in his hand the cup, and making him drink, and the bill of our account, and making him accountable. 3. In reſpect of God's acceptation of that ſatisfaction which Chriſt performed and payed down for them.

This being the meaning of the words, we come to hint at ſome things from them; and the very opening of them may give us ſome information in the way of the goſpel, and of a notable ground of footing to our faith. If we could rightly apprehend God making this tranſaction with the Mediator, we might not only have a ground to our faith, but a great encouragement to come to Chriſt, and to reſt on him who hath thus put himſelf in our room before the tribunal of Divine Juſtice, and it ſhould awaken and warm our faith and love towards him.

But obſerve here more particularly, 1. That all the elect people of God are lying under iniquity even as others. This we ſpoke to the laſt day, and ſhall not repeat what was ſaid then: It is with reſpect to iniquity in the elect, that all the buſineſs of redemption is tranſacted, and from hence as the occaſion, it hath its riſe, even from God's being offended, and from the neceſſity of a Mediator; for this doth preſuppoſe our debt, and a ſentence ſtanding againſt us, till Chriſt interpoſed for the removing of it.

2. From its being ſaid before, that *every one hath turned to his own way*; and here, that, *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Obſerve*, that every one of the elect beſide the common ſtate of ſin wherein all are, hath his own particular guilt that is *in his own way*; this is clearly holden forth here, while it is ſaid, that not only *like ſheep we have gone aſtray*, but that *every one hath turned to his own way*; which as it holds forth a way in them all different from God's way, ſo alſo a way in every one of them ſomewhat different from another's way; and this is called a *walking in the counſel of our own heart*, Pſal. lxxxi. and

a man's *own sore*, 2 Chron. vi. 29. and a man's *own iniquity*, Psal. xviii. 23. because it is in a special manner his. To clear it a little, consider that sin is peculiar to a believer, or may be called his *own way* in these respects; 1*st*, In respect of his being more addicted to one sin than another, which is usually called a man's predominant. Two men may both be covetous and passionate, but the one of them may be called a covetous man, because he is especially given to that sin of covetousness; and the other may be called a passionate man, because he is especially given to passion. 2*dly*, In respect of some peculiar aggravating circumstances; though we dare not particularly determine as to persons, yet if we look through all men and women, it will be readily found that there is some sin, which in respect of some or several aggravations, is in some a greater sin than it is in others; and hereby God hath given ground of humiliation to all. There is not a man, as we just now hinted, but usually he hath an evil which is at a greater height in him than in another; as for instance, one may be given more to the sin of drunkenness, another more to hypocrisy, another more to uncleanness, &c. I do not speak so much here of the divers kinds of sin, as of the several aggravations of this or that sin that they are given to; such and such a man may have aggravations that will argue such a predominant evil in him far beyond what it is in others; And it is from this ground that a believer not in a complimenting way, but most really and sincerely doth call and account himself the *chief of sinners*; because there are some aggravations that heighten his sin above the sin of others, or above that same sin in others; as a weak believer may have one good thing in him more commendable than is in a stronger believer; so the stronger believer may have one sin, that in respect of its aggravations, may give him ground to look on himself as beyond others in sin.

Use 1.

Use 1. It serves much for our humiliation, in as far as this adds to our sinfulness; there are none of us, but beside the common way of sinning incident to all, we have something that is peculiar to ourselves, we have *our own way*, wherewith we are chargeable above and beyond others; we will all readily grant that we are sinners, but who of us will own our particular and peculiar guilt that doth more easily beset us? Who amongst you are as doves of the valleys every one mourning for *his own iniquity*, for his own plague and sore, that by several circumstances may be aggravated as to its sinfulness beyond the sin of others.

Use 2. The second use which is the scope, serves to shew the exceeding greatness of Christ's sufferings. O! What a shock, he endured, when he had not only all the common sins of the elect to satisfy for, but when all their peculiar sins with their respective aggravations, rendezvoused and met on him? It serves likewise to exalt the free grace of God, and the condescendency of our blessed Lord Jesus who took in all together in his making satisfaction for them when there were several sorts of them, as if every one of the elect had been set to invent a new sin; what great and sore-suffering was here, when he condescended to drink the cup that had the direful effects of all the sins of the elect, wrung into it? When not only in general he takes on him the sins of the elect, but this and that man's particular sins, which were all reckoned and summed up in Christ's account, and for which he was made to satisfy; and wherein justice proceeded equally and equipollently; this notably confirmed the reality of Christ's satisfaction, by suffering what all the elect should have suffered eternally, or the equivalent of it; for if there had not been a proportional satisfaction in his sufferings, wherefore serves such an enumeration of his sufferings?

Use 3. The third use serves to inform us how much we are in Christ's debt; and what a great encouragement

ment we have to believe; and withal, what notable ground of conſolation believers have. I ſay, 1. It ſhews how much we are in Chriſt's debt. When we take a view of all our ſins, and conſider that there was a particular view taken of them in the covenant of redemption, not only all our common ſins, but even all the particular and peculiar ſins of believers were reckoned unto Chriſt the ſurety, and put on his account, and he engaged to ſatisfy for all, and pay the whole reckoning; doth it not lay a great obligation on us to him who counted for the leaſt farthing of our debt? We, like a number of bankrupts, did contract the debt, and the accompt was put in his hand, not only (as I juſt now ſaid) of all our common ſins, but of this and that particular ſin with all their ſeveral aggravations, and the ſinful circumſtances that did heighten them; and he ſatisfied for them all: And of this we ſhould take ſpecial notice; for it may readily deceive us to look upon the covenant of redemption as a bargain in general; becauſe there is a particularneſs in it, to ſhew not only the ſovereignty, but the exactneſs of juſtice, and alſo the riches of God's grace, and of the great condeſcendency of Chriſt's love to elect ſinners. 2. It is a great encouragement to believe. For even thoſe ſins that would frighten ſerious and exerciſed ſouls from coming forward to Chriſt, were all counted for and put on Chriſt's ſcore, and were all ſatisfied for by him. 3. It is a notable ground of conſolation to believers when they are ready to think that their particular ſins are unpardonable. They think that reckoning might be made for all their common evils; but as for this moſt ſinful and ſhameful unthankfulneſs, this deſpiſing of his grace, this woful unbelief, *&c.* It ſtares them in the face, and they know not well how that will be done away. But believers in Chriſt who are ſorrowfully and ſadly perplexed on this account, Is that *your own way?* It is tranſacted on Chriſt's ſcore with the

the reſt: *Every one of us hath turned to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; O! impregnable ground of ſtrong conſolation! which is as *good news from a far country*, a non-ſuch cordial to a fainting ſoul.

3. *Obſerve* here, That an elect believer, will not only be ſenſible of ſin in the general, but of his own particular and peculiar ſinful way; or thus, it is a good token when people look not only on ſin in common, but on their own peculiar ſinful way; or thus, that men ſhould conſider their ſinfulneſs, not only in common, but in particular with its ſeveral aggravations. The ſcriptures which we cited before do confirm this, as Pſal. xviii. 22. *I kept myſelf from mine iniquity*; and 2 Chron. vi. 29. where ſaith Solomon, *When every one ſhall know his own ſore and his own grief*; or as it is, 1 Kings viii. 38. *The plague of his own heart.* This implies theſe two things, 1*ſt*, A diſtinct ſearching for ſin; when a man not only looks on himſelf as a ſinner, but looks on his ſin by reaſon of ſeveral aggravating circumſtances as being above and beyond the ſin of others, and abhorreth and loatheth himſelf as the chief of ſinners; as David doth when he ſaith, Pſal li. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned*; he is not their extenuating his ſin, as if it were done only againſt God, but aggravating his ſin, as the words following ſhew, and *I have done this evil in thy ſight*; as if he had ſaid, Thy concern in the matter doth moſt affect and afflict me, *Thou loveſt truth*, or ſincerity, *in the inward parts*; but I have been (alas) all this time juggling and greatly playing the hypocrite, which makes it to be a wonderful great evil; and Pſal. lxv 3. *Iniquities prevail againſt me*; and as Paul doth, who calls himſelf *the chief of ſinners*, 1 Tim. i. 15. 2*dly*, That believers before converſion, yea, and in reſpect of their natural inclination even after their converſion, are wofully inclined each of them to a ſinful way of their own,

own, called Eccleſ. xi. *The way of a man's own heart:* And of this believers ſhould be ſenſible not only of their ſinfulneſs in general, and of their particular acts of ſin, but of their peculiar ſinful acts, and that for theſe ends or uſes.

1. It ſerves deeply to humble people, and to preſs them forward to repentance. When we conſider our own way to be ſinful beyond others, and that ſuch a man hath ſinned, but his ſin hath not ſuch aggravations as mine, this makes the ſoul to bluſh, and to ſay, as it is, Pſal. xl. 12. *Innumerable evils have compaſſed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up, they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me*; he wonders at himſelf how a man can be ſo given to ſin, and every day to add one new ſinful ſtep to another, and never to weary and give over; this makes him to bluſh and to be aſhamed, as it is, Ezek. xvi. 63. the remembering of common ſins, and of this or that particular act of ſin, will not ſo effect this; but when a ſinner remembers, that ſuch a ſin hath been *his own way*, that humbles and ſtops his mouth exceedingly.

2. This adds a peculiarity to the grace of God in the believer's eſteem, and maketh it ſo much the more amiable and admirable to him; as it is with Paul when he ſaith, 1 Tim. i. 13. *&c. I was a blaſphemer, and a perſecutor, and injurious, nevertheleſs I obtained mercy, and the grace of God was exceeding abundant towards me. This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am the chief; howbeit for this cauſe I obtained mercy, that in me he might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them that ſhould hereafter believe on him.* I was, as if he had ſaid, ſingular in ſinning, but grace was eminent and ſingular in ſhewing mercy, and hath caſt a copy thereof in me that is ſingularly eminent. The peculiarneſs of believers ſin, as it makes

makes them know the aggravations of it beyond others, so it makes them exalt grace the more.

3. It serves someway to discriminate a sound believer from a hypocrite, and a right sight of sin from that which is not so. It is not so much to know that we are sinners, for the light of a natural conscience will tell men that, especially when their lives are so bad; but it is more to know, and rightly to take in the peculiarness that is in our way of sinning, to discover the many windings and turnings of the deceitful heart in following of such a sin that it is addicted to. This makes a believer think that there is no body's heart like his. We see ordinarily that but very few, if any, that are natural men, will own freely the peculiarness of their way of sinning; and even when they will own this, that they are sinners in general, yet they shun to own that they are given to such a sinful way of their own, and the particular turnings and windings of their own hearts to that way; but few will grant that they are given to despising or slighting of Christ, or to hypocrisy, self-seeking, lying, &c. I will not be peremptory here, to say that every body must know what is this one peculiar sinful way; for some see so many predominant sins in themselves, that they hardly can pitch upon one more than another; nor upon the other side will I positively say, that they are all gracious that see one sin more than another to carry sway in them; but this I say, that it contributes much for the humbling of the sinner, and for exalting of free grace; and that believers will see many windings and turnings in and to their own way, that others who are not believers will not see, and will see one predominant after another; whereas a natural man, though he complimentingly call himself *the chief of sinners*, yet he doth not really think himself to be such, but rather, if he be given to drunkenness, to filthiness, or the like, he will readily fix upon David and Lot, or some others of the saints to excuse or extenuate it;

but the believer can get none to compare himself in the point of sinfulness. *Iniquities prevail over me*, saith David, in the singular number; but when he speaks of the pardoning and purging away sin, he speaks in the plural, associating others with himself, *As for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away*, Psal. lxv. 3.

4. Consider your sinful way as it is the occasion of this transaction, and of the laying of our iniquities upon Christ, as the result of it, and we have this sweet observation, that the elect are considered in the covenant of redemption as foully and vilely sinful, and with all the aggravations of their sins and sinful ways; so that they cannot be fouler and more vile in time, than they were considered to be when they were given to Christ to be satisfied for by him: How were they then considered? The text tells us even as *straying sheep:* But that is not all, they are considered as such who have had their own peculiar way of straying from God, and have *turned* aside to, and run on in their *own* sinful *way:* Thus the Lord considered the elect in the covenant of redemption; thus Jesus Christ considered them in the undertaking for them, even with all the several aggravations of their sinfulness; so that they are not, nor can be worse in time, than they were considered to be before time: This is so ordered by the Lord for these ends. 1. That justice might be distinctly, exactly, and fully satisfied. And that it might be known that it is so, he would needs be restored to his honour, to his declarative, or manifested honour and glory, which suffered by man's fall, and by the many great and variously aggravated sins of the elect, and would have his justice, as I said, fully satisfied: And therefore as there is a volume of a book, wherein all the elect are written, for whom Christ should satisfy, so there is a volume of what, and for what he should satisfy, that there may be a proportionable satisfaction and price told down to justice. 2. That believers may have a more full view

of

of the way of grace, and of Chriſt's undertaking for them. When Jeſus Chriſt undertook our debt, he had a full view of the ſum he was to pay, he knew what he had to pay to the laſt farthing, and what his peoples ſins would coſt him, and yet he was not unwilling to engage to ſatisfy, but did ſatisfy according to his engagement to the full. 3. It is alſo ordered ſo for this end, even to confirm the believer's faith, when he cometh to take hold of Chriſt, and of the covenant; and when this objection mutters within him, dare ſuch a ſinful wretch as I take hold of Chriſt, who have been thus and thus polluted with ſin? Yes, ſaith the text, for theſe ſins ſo and ſo aggravated; for they were not unknown to the Father, nor to the Mediator when thou waſt bargained about: Nay, theſe ſins with their aggravations were expreſly conſidered in the covenant of redemption, and there is no ſin already committed, or to be committed by thee in time, that was not conſidered before time: What was your poſture, believers, when God *paſſed by, and caſt the ſkirt of his love over you?* Were you not *caſt out in the open field, wallowing in your own blood, with your navels uncut, having no eye to pity you*, &c. as it is, Ezek. xvi. And wherefore I pray is this ſet down? *But* for all to let you know that ye are no worſe in time than ye were conſidered to be before ye had a being; alſo, to argue the love and grace of God in Chriſt, and to draw you in to him, that ſince God and Chriſt the Mediator in the tranſaction about your redemption, ſtood not on your ſinfulneſs, ye may not ſtand on it when ſeriouſly ſenſible of it, but may ſubmit to his righteouſneſs, and ſay, Be it ſo, Lord, I am content to take what thou freely offereſt. And the more ſinful and loſt ye be in yourſelves, when ſuitably affected therewith, the more wonderful is the grace of God in the plot of your redemption, the more ſtrong is your conſolation, and the greater ground of believing have ye; your ſins do not ſur-

prize God, nor the Mediator; the bargain was made before your sins were committed, and therefore the price must reach them, even when they are all summed up together: He was content to accept of them so as to satisfy for them; and blessed be he for evermore that accepted of the bargain, and paid the price according to his undertaking!

SERMON XXVII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 6.

Verse 6. *All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

IN the former verse the prophet hath asserted most wonderful truths, and very concerning to the people of God, and yet such truths as will not be easily digested by natural reason. 1. That our Lord Jesus was put to sore and sad sufferings, *He was wounded and bruised*, &c. 2. That these sad sufferings were for us the elect; it was for our sins, and what was due to the elect, he was made to bear them, *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.* 3. The end of these sufferings, or the effect that followed on them to us, was pardon of sin, peace with God, and healing: *The chastisement of our peace was on him, and by his stripes we are healed.*

And each of these being more wonderful than another, therefore the prophet goes on to clear their rise, which

which is no less wonderful; how it came to pass that he suffered, and suffered so much, and that we have such benefit by his sufferings: It could not, as if he had said, be otherways, for it behoved our Lord Jesus to suffer, and to suffer so much, and for us; neither was it unreasonable that it should be for our benefit, *For we had all like lost sheep gone astray, and every one of us had turned to his own way:* And there was no way of relief for us, but by Christ's stepping into our room, and interposing for us, and engaging to pay our debt; and by virtue of that interposition and bargain, *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:* and therefore, 1. Would ye have the reason of Christ's so great sufferings? here it is, the elect had many sins, and he interposing for them, their account was crost out, and they were reckoned on his score. 2. If the cause and reason be asked, how it came to pass that Christ suffered so much for us? here it is answered, He undertook to satisfy for our iniquities, and God imputed them to him; even as if a debtor were pursued, and one should step in and be surety for him, and being enacted surety, should take it upon him, to become liable for the debt; the exacting it of him is the laying it on him: But 3. If it be asked, how it comes to pass that his suffering becomes our healing, and brings peace to us? It is answered, it was so transacted and agreed upon; he was content to pay all our debt, and the Father accepted of his payment for ours; our blessed Lord Jesus engaging and satisfying, the elect are set free, and justice betaketh itself to him as the responsal party. This is the scope of the words, though they are but few, yet exceeding full and significant, as holding forth the fountain and fundamental grounds of the gospel: We shall consider them in these three respects, 1. As they imply a covenant and transaction, whereby the elects sin are transferred on Christ, and his righteousness is made applicable to them; Christ undertaking to pay

their

their debt, and Jehovah accepting thereof, and promising that his satisfaction made on the behalf of the elect, shall be applied to them. 2. In respect of the effects, which are two-fold, which though they seem contrary the one to the other, yet they are well consistent together, and subordinate the one to the other: The *1st* is, Justice on Christ's part; he satisfies for the debt due by the elect. The *2d* is, Mercy and grace to the elect, which is also implied; but comparing these words with the former, it is very clear; he is wounded and bruised, and they are healed, the chastisement of their peace was on him, the imputing of their debt to him is the cause that it is not imputed to them. *3dly*, In respect of the influence that the eternal covenant hath on these effects, it lays down the way how these may be justly brought about, which is the scope of all, even to shew how Jesus Christ being the innocent Son of God, and without sin, was made liable to the debt of the elects sin; he became Surety for them, and is made liable on that account to satisfy for them. It is clear to us also, how his sufferings stood for theirs; which may seem to be unreasonable and unjust among men, that the sufferings of an innocent party should stand for the guilty; it was so articled in the covenant of redemption, that the Son, as Mediator, interposing and undertaking to pay the elects debt, the Lord Jehovah, the Creditor, should not reckon it on their score, but on the Mediator's, and that he should count for it. The prophet in this verse all along is touching on the sweet and pleasant string of this notable plot and contrivance of God concerning the redemption of elect sinners, called the *covenant of redemption*; which, if these words be considered with respect to their scope, they do in all the parts of it clearly hold forth; and therefore the clearing of it, being the clearing of a main ground of our faith in reference to Christ's sufferings, and to the way how they are made good to us, and as to the benefits that

that come by them to us, we cannot speak too much nor too often of it, if we speak of it suitably to the surpassing excellency of the matter.

The *first doctrine* supposed here, is, that there is an eternal covenant and transaction betwixt the Lord Jehovah and the Mediator, wherein the method concerning the redemption and salvation of the elect is contrived: There is an eternal covenant past betwixt God and the Mediator, wherein all that is executed, or will be, concerning the elect (till the day of judgment) was contrived: There is nothing relating to the elects salvation, but it was in this transaction exactly contrived and laid down, even as it is in time executed: And it is called a *covenant* in scripture, and we call it so, not strictly and properly, as if all things in covenants among men were in it, but because materially and substantially it is so, and the resemblance will hold for the most part; the Lord having laid down in it the plot of man's salvation in a legal way, so as his grace and mercy may be glorified, and his justice satisfied, hath put it in this form, so as it may bear the name of a covenant: Wherein we have 1. Mutual parties, *the Lord Jehovah*, the party offended on the one side, and *the Lord Mediator*, the party engaging to satisfy on the other side; which shows the freeness of the redemption of the elect as to them, and also the certainty of their salvation: And likewise, the immutability of God's purpose, for the parties are not mutable creatures, for on the one side is Jehovah, and on the other side the Mediator, who is considered as incarnate and the head of the elect. This whole scheme was contrived there, to wit, in the council of the God-head, for promoting of that great end, the glorifying of the grace and justice of God in the elects salvation. 2. What is it about? Even about this, how to get the elect saved from the curse, to which on their foreseen fall and sinning, they were made liable; redemption, necessarily presupposing man's

man's fall and the covenant of works to which the certification and threatning was added, *The ſoul that ſins ſhall ſurely die*, and the elect preſuppoſed as fallen as well as others, are certainly liable to the curſe, except a ſatisfaction for them do intervene; ſo that the elect are conſidered as having ſinned, and as being in themſelves loſt. And what is the Lord Jehovah and the Mediator doing, what are they about in this covenant? It is how to get the puniſhment due to the elect for their ſins removed from them: And theſe perſons *us all* in the text, are all the elect, wherein there is implied a particular conſideration of them that are deſigned to life and ſalvation, and a particular conſideration of all their ſins, and of their ſeveral aggravations, that there may be a proportion betwixt the price paid, and the wrong that God hath ſuſtained by their ſinning againſt him. 3. The occaſion of this covenant, and the reaſon why it behoved to be, is held forth in the firſt words, *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, and turned every one of us unto his own way:* The elect as well as others had made themſelves, through their ſinning, liable to God's wrath and curſe, and they were uncapable of life and ſalvation till the curſe was removed: So that there is a let and obſtruction in the way of the execution of the decree of election (which muſt ſtand for the glorification of God's grace and mercy, primarily intended in all this work) and till this let be removed, the glorification of God's grace is and will be obſtructed; for the removal of which obſtruction there is a neceſſity of a Redeemer, for the elect are not able to pay their own debt themſelves: Now that there may be a Redeemer, and that a price of redemption may be laid down, there is alſo a neceſſity of a covenant, otherwiſe redemption cannot be, if a tranſaction do not precede, on which the Redeemer's interpoſing is founded. 4. What is the price, what is the ſtipulation, or that which the Mediator is engaged to, and that

that which provoked juſtice requireth? It is even ſatisfaction for all the wrongs that the ſins of the elect did, or were to do the majeſty of God: Their ſins deſerved wounding and ſmiting, and the capitulation runs thus, that juſtice ſhall get that of the Mediator, that the elect may be ſpared. And comparing this verſe with the former, upon the one ſide, our Lord Jeſus gives his back to bear their burden, and engages to ſatisfy for their debt, and to undergo the puniſhment due to them: And upon the other ſide, Jehovah accepts of this offer and engagement, and lays the burden of their debt on him; and as the Mediator puts himſelf in their room for payment of their debt; ſo he lays it on him, and accepts of it. 5. The end of this great tranſaction, to wit, of the undertaking on the Mediator's part, and of the acceptation on the Father's part, is, that the elect may have pardon and peace, and that by his ſtripes they may be healed: That juſtice may ſpare them and purſue him, and that the diſcharge of the debt purchaſed by him, may be made as good to them, as if they had payed the debt themſelves, or had never owed any thing to juſtice.

Hence *deductions* may be made holding forth ſeveral points of truth, as, 1. Concerning the exactneſs of the number of the elect. 2. Concerning the virtue and efficacy of the price which the Mediator hath payed, and the fulneſs of his ſatisfaction. 3. Concerning his imputed righteouſneſs, which is, or may be called the laying of his righteouſneſs on us, as our iniquity was laid on him; he is counted the ſinner by undertaking the elects debt, and the elect by receiving the offered righteouſneſs in the goſpel, are accounted righteous by virtue of his ſatisfying for their debt. 4. Concerning the ground and matter of that wonderful ſoul-ſatisfaction and raviſhment that is here; that God ſhould be thus minding the ſalvation of the elect, and thus contriving and ordering the work of their redemption, that their debt ſhall be payed, and yet nothing, to ſpeak ſo, come out of their purſe;

and that by ſo excellent a means as the intervention of the Mediator, and that this ſhall, notwithſtanding the dear price payed by him, be made good to the elect freely.

Uſe 1. O! look not on the ſalvation of ſinners, and the bringing of a ſinner to heaven, as a little or light thing, it being the greateſt work and moſt wonderful that ever was heard of; yea it is in effect the end of all things which God hath made, and of his preſerving and guiding the world in the order wherein it is governed, even that he may have a church therein for the praiſe of the glory of his grace. We are exceedingly culpable in this, that we value not the work of redemption as we ought, and that we endeavour not to pry into, and conſider the admirable and deep wiſdom of God, that goes along with and ſhines brightly in this whole contexture. Who could ever have found out this way? When the elect were lying under God's wrath and curſe, that then the Son of God ſhould undertake to ſatisfy for them, and that the majeſty of God ſhould be ſo far from all partiality and reſpect of perſons, that he will purſue his own dear Son for the elects debt when he undertakes it: This is the riſe of our ſalvation, and the channel wherein it runs; O! rare and raviſhing, O! admirable and amiable, O! beautiful and beneficial contrivance! bleſſed, eternally bleſſed be the contriver.

Uſe 2. The ſecond uſe ſerves to ſtir us up to know more of the way of ſalvation under this notion of God's covenanting with the Mediator; not thereby to oblige God to man's law and forms, but for helping us to the better and more eaſy underſtanding of theſe great things; and that we may ſee that the ſalvation of the elect is ſure; foraſmuch as it is laid down by way of bargain, tranſaction or covenant betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator, whom the Lord will no more fail in performing the promiſe made to him, than he hath failed in giving the ſatisfaction required.

This

This should help both to clear and confirm the faith of believers, and strengthen the hope of all who are fled for refuge to take hold of him, in the certain expectation of those things engaged for in the covenant, seeing there is as much reason to think, that Jehovah will make good his promises to the Mediator, as there is to think that he hath performed all that he engaged himself for.

The 2*d* thing here is, the native effect or fruit of the covenant, and that which the prophet aims at, even to shew how it came to pass that Christ suffered so much, because it was so covenanted, stated and ordained, because he was by a prior contrivance and contract substituted with his own hearty consent in the room of the elect, who had many and great sins to count for; whence *observe*, That by virtue of this eternal covenant that past betwixt God and the Mediator, the complete punishment that was due to all the elect for their sins in the greatest aggravations was laid upon Jesus Christ: *Jehovah laid upon him the iniquities of us all:* This is frequently mentioned in this chapter, as particularly in the words going before, *He carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, &c. And it is sufficiently confirmed in the New Testament, as 2 Cor. v. *He who knew no sin, was made sin for us:* He had no sin in himself, but by virtue of this covenant, he was made the sacrifice for our sins, and made to bear the punishment thereof: And Gal. iii. 13. *He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, he himself being made a curse for us.*

There are two words which we shall a little clear in this doctrine; and secondly, give some reasons of it; and then thirdly, we shall speak to some uses from it.

1. For the two words or things in the doctrine to be cleared, they are these, *First*, What we mean by this, when we say, iniquity is laid upon Christ. The *second* is, How is it laid upon him? as to the first,

when we say, iniquity is laid upon Christ, we mean these things briefly, 1*st*, That our Lord Jesus is really made accountable, and liable to justice for those iniquities, as if they had been his own, by virtue of this covenant; he having engaged to God's justice to pay the elects debt, his engagement makes him liable to it. 2*dly*, We mean that not only our Lord Jesus is made liable to our debt, but really he is made to satisfy for it. In short, we have done the wrong, but he makes the amends, as if he had done the wrong himself, *The just* satisfies *for the unjust; he in whose mouth there was no guile*, was made to satisfy for guilty sinners as if he had been the guilty person himself. By the sins of the elect God's declarative holiness suffered; creatures malapertly brake his command, and his justice was injured. The creature contended for the victory, and that even after the curse was pronounced, and they had believed the devil more than God: But our Lord Jesus comes in and makes the amends, and the holiness of God is vindicated by his obedience, and his justice vindicated by his suffering. The elect have deserved wounding; but says the Mediator, let the wounds which they deserved come on me, let them be mine; and thus he makes reparation of the wrong done; and though the elect be spared, yet hereby the Lord is known to be as really and as much a hater of sin, and as just in fulfilling his threatnings, as if the elect had been smitten in their own persons; because he punished sin in his own Son; yea, by this means he is seen so much the more to be holy, severe, pure and spotless, that the Son of God sweetly submits to his becoming man, and to these terrible sufferings for satisfying divine justice. Here, O! here the spotlessness and severity of the justice of God, as also the greatness of the glory of free grace and love shine forth conspicuously. 3*dly*, It implies this, that really there was a converting and turning of that wrath, and of those sufferings proportionably on

on Jeſus Chriſt, which juſtice was to have inflicted on the elect eternally, if he had not interpoſed for them; and taken that full cup that was given to him, and put in his hand, which would have been an eternal hell to elect ſinners; but they are made to meet on him in one great ſea; he had it to drink, even the dregs of it; in which reſpect, Gal. iii. 13. he is ſaid to be *made a curſe for us*. The Lord will not paſs from one farthing of what was due to him, and will be ſatisfied with no leſs than proportionable ſatisfaction to that which was due to juſtice by the elect themſelves, though the Surety was his own only Son. Therefore it behoved Chriſt to come under the curſe, in which ſenſe he is ſaid to *be made a curſe for us*, which ſuppoſeth that he endured the ſame curſe and puniſhment due to the elects ſins in all the eſſentials of it. He behoved to die, and to have his ſoul ſeparate from his body for a time, and for a ſeaſon to want in a great meaſure the comfortable manifeſtations of God's favour and preſence, and to have wrath purſuing him, and horror ſeizing upon him, but our bleſſed Lord being ſpotleſs and without ſin, and having a good conſcience, was not capable of theſe, in ſome ſenſe, accidental circumſtances, of unbelief, ſinful anxiety and deſperation, that ſinful finite creatures are liable to when they come under wrath.

The ſecond word or thing to be cleared in the doctrine is, How are inquities laid upon Chriſt Jeſus? They are laid upon him in three reſpects: 1. In reſpect of the eternal tranſaction betwixt Jehovah, and him as Mediator ſuſtaining the perſons of the elect; even as one man hath another's debt laid on him, when by a law-ſentence he is made liable to it; ſo is Chriſt made liable to the elects iniquity, when their account is blotted out, and the debt as it were written down in his account to be ſatisfied for. 2. In reſpect of juſtice purſuing him for it; when he becometh ſurety and full debtor for the elect, he is put to pay

pay their debt to the leaſt farthing; the Lord muſters up againſt him his terrors, and commands *his ſword to awake, and to ſmite the man that is his fellow.* But *3dly* and mainly, In reſpect of his actual undergoing the curſe and ſuffering which the elect ſhould have ſuffered; for it is not the work of a court to paſs a ſentence only, but alſo to ſee to the execution of the ſentence; not only are orders given to the ſword to awake and ſmite, but the ſword falls on and ſmites him actually; and tho' from the apprehenſion of the anger of God, as man, and without the ſenſible and comforting manifeſtation of his Father's love, and his ſeemingly forſaking him for a time, he prayed, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me;* but it could not be, therefore he ſubmits moſt ſweetly to it; and not only is the cup put in his hand, but the dregs of wrath are, as it were, wrung out into it, and he muſt needs drink it up all; which manifeſtly appears in his *agony* in the garden, when he is made to *ſweat blood;* and in his complaint (if we may ſo call it) *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, and what ſhall I ſay?* and in thoſe ſtrange words uttered by him on the croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* All which tells us plainly, that not only was he enacted ſurety, and had the ſentence paſt on him, but that really he ſatisfied and had the ſentence executed on him; that in his ſoul he was really pierced and wounded, and that with far deeper wounds than thoſe were which the ſoldiers by the ſpear and nails made in his body, before the elects diſcharge of their debt could be procured and obtained. More of his particular ſufferings the following words hold forth: But it is clear, that he ſuffered really, and ſuffered much; that not only he undertook to pay, but that he was actually purſued, and made to lay down the leaſt farthing whatever was due to juſtice by the elect. And this is the cauſe, why theſe words are brought in as the reaſon why he ſuffered ſo much, even becauſe

cauſe ſo many and ſo great ſins, with all their aggravations were laid upon him; and if his ſufferings were not great, and undergone for this end, to ſatisfie for the elects debt, that they might be ſet free, the prophet's ſcope would not be reached, neither would there be a ſuitable connexion betwixt the latter and the foregoing words.

As for the *ſecond*, to wit ſome *reaſons* of the doctrine, we ſhall briefly give you theſe *three*, why the elects ſins are laid on Chriſt, and put on his account, and why he was made to lie under the compleat puniſhment of them, by virtue of the covenant of redemption. 1*ſt*, Becauſe it did much contribute to the glory of God; for he had deſigned in his eternal council, that his grace ſhould be glorified in the ſalvation of the elect; and that his juſtice ſhould alſo be glorified in puniſhing of ſin, either in themſelves, or in their ſurety; and as free grace and mercy muſt be glorious in ſaving the elect, and juſtice in being ſatisfied for their ſins; ſo it is to that end, that ſince the elect cannot pay their own debt, their ſurety muſt pay it, and pay it fully, that the Lord in exacting ſatisfaction from him in their name, may be known to be juſt. 2*dly*, This way makes much for the confirmation of their faith who are believers; for what can juſtice demand that it hath not gotten? It is fully ſatisfied. And then for their conſolation; ſeeing the Father put his own Son to ſuffer, and to ſo great ſufferings for them, what is it that they may not confidently expect from ſuch a fountain? 3*dly*, This ſerves to hold forth the wonderful great obligation of the elect to God, and to the Mediator; for the greater their ſin was, the more he ſuffered; the greater their debt was, the more he paid; and their obligation is the greater to him; and they ought the more to love him, and their duty for his ſake; as it is ſaid of the woman, Luke vii. *She loved much, for much was forgiven her:* So this way of paying the elects debt,

debt, calls and ſtrongly pleads, and alſo makes way for much warm and tender love in them to Jeſus Chriſt.

In the 3*d* place, We come to the *uſes* of the *doctrine:* To which I ſhall premiſe this word of advice to you, That ye would not look on theſe things as taſteleſs and unſavory; for had we not had theſe precious truths to open to you, we ſhould have had no preaching to this purpoſe, no ground to ſpeak of life to you, nor the leaſt hope or expectation of life. And indeed it may be ſadly regretted, and that amongſt a multitude of profeſſing people, that theſe ſubſtantial truths of the goſpel are ſo taſteleſs, and and little reliſhing to the moſt part of men, which too evidently appears in the unconcernedneſs, wearied, and gazing poſture of ſome, and in the ſlumbering and ſleeping of others in our publick aſſemblies. If our hearts were in a right frame, half a word, if we may ſo ſpeak, to this purpoſe, would be awakening and alarming to us. However, this is a great privilege in itſelf: Heathens may, and do know ſomething of moral duties; but it is a privilege which we have and they want, that the fundamental truths of the goſpel are amongſt us and not amongſt them.

The firſt *uſe* ſerves to let us ſee the brightneſs of the glory of grace and truth, of mercy and juſtice ſhining clearly here. Can there be any greater mercy, and more pure than this, that the Lord ſhould be gracious to ſinners, and to great ſinners, *that had turned every one of them to their own way*, in providing a Mediator, and ſuch a Mediator, in providing ſuch a help for them, and *laying that help upon one that is mighty*, and that he ſhould have done this of his own accord (to ſpeak with reverence) when the elect were in their ſins, and when there was nothing to be the impulſive or meritorious cauſe of it. And that the Father ſhould have laid this weight of puniſhment on Chriſt, the Son of his love, and purſued him at this rate

rate of holy ſeverity for ſinners debt? O! what grace and mercy ſhines here? and 2. The ſpotleſs juſtice of God doth alſo here wonderfully manifeſt itſelf; O! how exact is juſtice, when it will not quit a farthing even to the ſecond Perſon of the Godhead, when he became man, and man's ſurety? But ſince he hath put himſelf in the room of ſinners, *The Lord maketh all their iniquities to meet on him;* this is matter of admiration to men and angels, to conſider how juſtice and mercy run in one channel, and ſhine in one covenant, the one of them not encroaching upon the other.

Uſe 2. We may gather from this, ſome knowledge and clearneſs in the very great ſufferings of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for theſe things are here put together, 1. That he ſuffered for all the elect, *us all.* 2. For all the ſins of the elect, and for all the ſins of the elect in their higheſt and moſt aggravating circumſtances, the particular reckoning of them all, as it were, being caſt up, they are all put in one ſcore. 3. All theſe met together upon him at one time, like the ocean, from all parts, or even like ſo many regiments, or rather armies of men, all meeting together, and marſhalled to fall upon him. One ſin were enough to condemn, the many ſins of one is more, but all the ſins of all the elect are much more; they deſerved to have lain in hell eternally; but he coming in their room, all their ſins met as the violent force of waters on him. What then muſt his ſufferings be, when he was ſo put to it for all the ſins of all the elect, and that at once?

Uſe 3. We may gather hence a juſt account of the truth of Chriſt's ſatisfaction, and a ground of refutation of the Socinian error, a blaſphemy which is moſt abominable to be once mentioned, as if our Lord had ſuffered all this, only to give us an example, or as if there had not been a proportionable ſatisfaction in his ſufferings to our debt, nor an intention to ſatisfy juſ-

tice thereby: Every verse almost, not to say every word in this chapter refutes this; if he had not satisfied for our sins, why is he said to be here on the matter put in our room? And if his sufferings had not been very great, what needed the prophet to shew the reason of his great sufferings, in all the sins of the elect their meeting on him? There was sure a particular respect had to this, even to shew, that the meeting of all these sins of all the elect together upon Christ, did cause and procure great and extreme sufferings to him; he suffered the more that they had so many sins, seeing their many sins are given for the cause of his so much suffering.

Use 4. Here is great ground of consolation to believing sinners. *Out of this eater comes meat, and out of this strong comes sweetness.* The more and sharp and bitter these sufferings were to Christ, the report of them is in some respect the more savoury and sweet to the believer, whose effectual calling discovers his election. And indeed I cannot tell how many grounds of consolation believers have from this doctrine. But 1*st*, If they have sinned, there is here a Saviour provided for them. 2*dly*, This Saviour hath undertaken their debt. 3*dly*, He hath undertaken it with the Father's approbation. 4*thly*, As he hath undertaken it, so the Father hath laid on him all their iniquity. 5*thly*, All the elect come in here together in one roll, and there is but one covenant, and one Mediator for them all. The sin of the poorest, of the weakest and meanest, is transacted on him, as well as the sin of Abraham, the great friend of God, and father of the faithful, and the salvation of the one is as sure as the salvation of the other. All believers from the strongest to the weakest have but one right or charter to heaven, but one and the same security of the inheritance. 6*thly*, The Lord hath laid on him all the iniquities of all the elect with a particular respect to all their aggravations, and to all the several ways that they have turned

turned to ſin; their original ſin, and their actual tranſgreſſions, with their particular predominants, as to their puniſhment; and there is reaſon for it, becauſe the elect could not ſatisfy for the leaſt ſin. And it is neceſſary for the glorifying of grace, that the glory of the work of their ſalvation comes all on the Mediator's account, and none of it on theirs. *7thly*, All this is really done and performed by the Mediator, without any ſuit or requeſt of the elect, or of the believer, at leaſt as the procuring cauſe thereof. He buys and purchaſes what is needful for them, and pays for their diſcharge; and they have no more to do, but to call for an extract, and to take a ſealed remiſſion by his blood. As to the application thereof, the *uſes* that follow will give occaſion to ſpeak to it.

Uſe 5. Since it is ſo, then none would think little of ſin; which checks the great preſumption that is amongſt men and women, who think little and light of ſin, and that it is an eaſy matter to come by the pardon of it. They think there is no more to do, but barely and in a counterfeit manner to confeſs, they have ſinned, and to ſay, God is merciful, and hence they conclude, that God will not reckon with them: But did he reckon with the Mediator, and that ſo holily, rigidly and ſeverely too, and will he, think ye, ſpare you? If he 'dealt ſo with the green 'tree, what ſhall become of the dry?' Be not deceived, God will not be mocked.

And therefore *6thly* as the cloſe of all, ſee here the abſolute neceſſity of ſharing in Chriſt's ſatisfaction, and of having an intereſt therein by this covenant derived unto you, elſe know that ye muſt count for your own ſins; and if ſo, woe eternally to you. Therefore either betake yourſelves to the Mediator, that by his eye-ſalve ye may ſee, that by his gold ye may be enriched, and by his garments ye may be cloathed, that the ſhame of your nakedneſs do not appear: And that ye may, by being juſtified by his

knowledge, be free from the wrath to come, or otherways ye muſt and ſhall lie under it for ever.

Thus ye have the fulneſs of God's covenant on the one ſide, and the weightineſs and terribleneſs of God's wrath on the other ſide laid before you: If ye knew what a fearful thing his wrath were, ye would be glad at your hearts to hear of a Saviour, and every one would run and make haſte to be found in him, and to ſhare of his ſatisfaction, and to be ſure of a diſcharge by virtue of his payment of the debt, and they would give all diligence to make ſure their calling and election, for that end. The Lord himſelf powerfully perſuade you to do ſo.

SERMON XXVIII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 7.

Verſe 7. *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth.*

THOUGH the news of a ſuffering Mediator ſeem to be a ſad ſubject, yet it hath been, is, and will be, the great ſubject of the goſpel, and of the gladdeſt tidings that ever ſinners heard; this being the great thing that they ought in a ſpecial manner to know, even *Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified.* The prophet here takes a ſpecial delight to inſiſt on it, and in

in one verſe after another hath ſomething new of his ſufferings.

Having in the former verſe ſpoken to the occaſion, ground, and riſe of his ſufferings, to wit, the elects ſtraying like ſheep, their wandring and turning every one to his own way, and the Lord's laying on him the iniquity of them all; the elect that were given to Chriſt, being naturally at an enmity with God, and having run on in the courſe of their ſinful nature to the provoking of God; and their being no way for them to eſcape the wrath which by their ſins they had deſerved, till the Lord found out this means, to wit, the ſecond Perſon's interpoſing as their Mediator and ſurety, and engaging to pay their debt; on which followed the making over all their iniquities to him, according to the tranſaction made about them; which tranſaction being laid down, as we have heard, the prophet proceeds to ſhew Chriſt's executing and performing of the tranſaction; and becauſe it might be thought that it was ſo great a matter, as ſhould have much grievous ſuffering following upon it, to take on all our iniquities; he anſwers, That notwithſtanding all that, yet he took them on, and that very willingly and chearfully; or becauſe it might be thought, that the former words look as if God had laid the puniſhment of our iniquities on him, and that he had not taken it on himſelf, the prophet tells us, that it is not ſo, but that there was a mutual covenant betwixt God and the Mediator; and that the Mediator was as well content to bear the iniquity of the elect as the Father was content to lay it on him; and that though he was oppreſſed, afflicted, and ſuffered many and grievous ſtrokes, yet he repented not the bargain, but went out reſolutely in paying the ranſom of the elect as ſingly, as ever a ſheep went to the ſlaughter, or as it is, *dumb before the ſhearer, ſo he opened not his mouth* to ſpeak againſt it.

There are *three* things aſſerted here that ſerve to make

make up the scope, supposing the transaction to have gone before, 1. The Father's exacting the elects debt of the Mediator. 2. The Mediator's yielding and satisfying. 3. The manner how he did it, and that was willingly, readily, and chearfully. We shall first open the words a little, and then speak to some doctrines from them, reserving the *uses* to the conclusion of all.

1. Where it is said, *He was oppressed*, the words signify to *exact*; and we find it three ways applied in in scripture, 1. To the exacting of tribute, 2 Kings xxiii. 33. Where it is said, *That Pharaoh-Necho put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold*; it is the same word that is here. 2. Sometimes it is applied to the *exacting of debts*; as when a man is seized by an officer that has a writ out against him, and imprisonment follows upon it; so Deut. xv. 2. When the Lord tells his people, *The creditor shall not exact of his neighbour, nor of his brother, in the year of release.* 3. It is applied to *the exacting of labour*, as Isa. lviii. 3. *Ye exact all your labour*; and Exod. i. 11. The word *task-masters* comes from the same root. This being the ordinary signification of the word, it is turned here *oppressing* figuratively; because such exactors and task-masters in their rigorous usage of those whom they exact upon, are often oppressive; and their being no noun prefixed to the words in the original, they may stand as well thus, *It was exacted of him*; that which he was engaged to pay, he was fully exacted upon for it, to the least farthing; or take the words as they stand here, He was oppressed, that is, (as we use to speak) *strossed* or *distressed* for our debt; he was not only engaged, but according to his engagement he was put hard to it to satisfy. 2. It is said, *He was afflicted*, which is sometimes rendered *to answer*: And these two agree very well together; he was exacted upon, and he answered the debt; as when a bill of exchange for

for such a sum is drawn upon a man, and he answers it. And this exposition runs well and smoothly with the words following, *Yet he opened not his mouth*, he used no defence to exclude or shift the debt: He said not that it was not his, but he answered it indeed, and in a word said nothing to the contrary; or taking the words as they stand here translated, *He was afflicted;* they signify the effect that follows on his being exacted upon: Tho' it brake him not, yet it brought him very low, even to an afflicted condition. The 3. Thing is, that tho' he was brought thus low, and tho' it was not for his own, but for other peoples debts (which usually troubles men most) *Yet he opened not his mouth;* to shew his wonderful condescendency, and the great love from which it flows. He paid the elects debt with as good will, and as pleasantly, as if it had been his own proper and personal debt. Tho' he was the Son of God, and God equal with the Father, and might have brought legions of angels to destroy his enemies; yet *as the lamb brought to the slaughter, and as the sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.* And it may be that there is not only here relation or respect had to the sheep as it is an innocent, harmless, simple, easy creature, and untoward and refractory, as a bull or ox useth to be, but also respect had to it as it was made use of in the sacrifices. And so the meaning is; he yielded his life willingly when none could take it from him, for performing the indenture, if we may so say, and for satisfying the transaction past betwixt Jehovah and him.

So, having shown you how it comes to pass, that Christ suffered, and suffered so much, and was brought so low under his suffering: And having told you, that he engaged to pay the elects debt, and that the Father had laid their iniquities on him; lest any might think, that the Father would have spared his own Son, no, saith the prophet, *He was oppressed*, and not

not only ſo, but *afflicted* and humbled; and leſt it ſhould have been thought that the Lord Jehovah had better will to the bargain than the Mediator had: It is added, that he did ſatisfy the debt as willingly as the Father laid it on him, as theſe ſimilitudes made uſe of plainly hold forth.

Take theſe obſervations from the words, 1. That our Lord Jeſus having entered himſelf Surety for ſinners, was really put hard to it, and juſtice exacted the debt of him which he had undertaken and engaged to pay: read the whole ſtory of the goſpel, and it will make out this; it is ſaid by himſelf, Luke 24. *It behoved the Son of man to ſuffer theſe things, and then to enter into his glory;* he muſt needs go to Jeruſalem and ſuffer; and when the cup is in his hand, and his holy human nature, having a ſinleſs fear at it, makes him pray, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*, yet ſeeing here was a neceſſity, that either he ſhould drink it, or that the elect ſhould periſh, in the very next words, he ſweetly ſubjoins, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* And ſo hotly and hardly was he purſued by juſtice, that he muſt needs come to the curſed death of the croſs, and actually die: As if death had gotten a piece of dominion over the Lord of life, he is laid in the grave: So Zech. xiii. the Lord ſaith, *Awake, O ſword, againſt my ſhepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſmite the ſhepherd*; where we ſee, that when the good Shepherd and great Biſhop of ſouls, hath undertaken for the elects debt, juſtice gives a commiſſion as it were to its own holy revenge, to purſue the man that is God's fellow for that debt: That which we deſign to confirm in the doctrine, is not only, that our Lord Jeſus ſuffered, but that his ſuffering was by juſtice its exacting of him the debt of the elects ſin, according to the engagement that he came under to the Father; for the ſcope is to ſhew, not only that he ſuffered ſo great things, as oppreſſed and brought him very low; but

alſo

alſo that he was put by juſtice in theſe ſad ſufferings, to pay the debt that he had taken on him. For confirming and clearing of this, ye may conſider, 1. The titles which he has in ſcripture, he is called the *Surety of the better teſtament*, or covenant, Heb. vii. 22. and by that title he is ſhewn to have ſtood in our room, and anſwered for our debt: And he is called the Lamb that takes away the debt of ſin *by the ſacrifice of himſelf:* He ſtepped into our place, and kept off the ſtroke of the ſword of juſtice that would have lighted on us, had he not interpoſed. 2. Conſider the titles which his ſufferings and death have, Heb. ix. 12. he is ſaid to *purchaſe* (to wit by it) *eternal redemption for us.* And Rom. iii. 24. we are ſaid to be *juſtified through the redemption that is in Jeſus:* We were ſlaves to the devil, ſubject to the curſe, and adjudged to ſuffer for the wrongs that we had done to juſtice: And his ſuffering is called *redemption*, becauſe as the man that redeems the captive, gives a ranſom for him, ſo he interpoſed and payed a ranſom for us; it is alſo called a *propitiation*, 1 John ii. 2. *He is the propitiation for our ſins*, to wit, pleaſing to God, and accepted of him in the room of all the elect: And this word *propitiation*, as it ſuppoſeth God's being diſpleaſed with the elect before Chriſt's ſatisfaction, ſo it plainly holds forth his being well pleaſed with them on the account of his ſatisfaction. 3. Conſider thoſe ſcriptures that ſpeak not only of Chriſt's ſufferings, but of their end and ſcope, even the drawing of him down, to ſpeak ſo, into the elects room, as verſe 5*th* of this chapter, *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*, &c. he had the ſtroke, and we have the cure, 2 Cor. v. 21. *He was made ſin for us who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God through him.* We are ſinners, and Chriſt is ready to purchaſe righteouſneſs to us: And the way how he doth it, is by ſtepping into our room, and becoming our ſurety, and he engaging as ſuch, the law reaches him on that ground; ſo Gal. iii.

He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us: We were under the curse, and liable to be pursued by it, and our Lord Jesus becomes a curse to deliver us from it. Considering then the end of God's covenant, which is to glorify his justice and grace, that sinners may know it is an evil thing to sin and depart from God, and that grace is a very costly thing, whereunto he hath made access through the vail, which is his flesh; and considering Christ's undertaking, without which they could not be set free, it could not be otherwise. This is a truth that hath in it much of the marrow of the gospel, and tends much to humble us, and is also very much for our comfort: what was justice seeking of Christ when he suffered and was in an agony? If thou be a believer or an elect sinner, it was even exacting thy debt of him: and would it not affect an ingenuous debtor to see his surety dragged, haled, and hurried to prison for his debt? Even so, if we could look on Christ's sufferings as so many summons arresting him for our debt, it could not but affect us with much sorrow for our sins, that brought him to this, and with much love to him, who was content to be so dealt with for them; and no doubt this is one of the reasons why *he will have his death remembered till he come again*, even that we may see our obligation to him, and be suitably affected with it.

2dly, *Observe*, That the debt of the elects sins was with a holy severity exacted of Christ to the very full worth or value: This proceeding was, as to Christ, by way of justice. If we look to the purchase that he made, to wit, the elects souls, he laid down as good in their room, or if we look to the transaction or bargain going before, whatever was in the stipulation, he payed and satisfied to the full, nothing was remitted or given him back; or if we look to the curse due to the elect, that was inflicted on him, and he himself was made a curse for us, looking on the curse simply as

as penal, and what was bitter in it, this certainly ſhews his condeſcendency in his ſufferings ſo much the more.

3*dly*, *Obſerve*, That our Lord Jeſus was brought exceeding low while the debt of the elect was exacted of him: He was put to exceeding ſore affliction, much ſtraitned and ſtreſſed by the juſtice of God exacting of him the debt due by elect ſinners. We ſpoke to ſome words before, which is an evidence of this, as *he was wounded*, *bruiſed*, *chaſtiſed*, &c. And now we ſee here the effect when juſtice puts him to it: After he hath taken on the debt, he is tried, ſtripped naked, pinched and diſtreſſed ere he get it payed: If we conſider our Lord Jeſus as God, he is utterly incapable of any ſuch thing; but if we look on him as Mediator, God-man, God did much withdraw from him the influence of his comforting preſence, while he had the cup of wrath in his hand, ſo he is brought exceeding low, and ſadly afflicted. And theſe four conſiderations (under which we may ſee him paying our debt) may clear it, 1. That he laid aſide the glory for a time that he had with the Father before the world was, which therefore that it may be reſtored to him again, he prayeth John xvii. 5. it having been as to the manifeſtation thereof in his perſon eclipſed, interrupted, and darkened for a ſeaſon: Hence the apoſtle ſays, Philip. ii. that *he emptied himſelf*, *and became of no reputation*; as if his glory had not been diſcernable for a time; he that is judge of quick and dead, is himſelf judged; he that created heaven and earth, hath not whereon to lay his head: Though all the kings of the earth hold their treaſures of him, yet he was ſo poor that he lived upon the alms of others; for *women miniſtred unto him*. 2. Not only hath he a being that is mean and low, but he is exceedingly afflicted, he ſuffered hunger; he is purſued, as if he had been a thief or a robber; a band of men come and apprehend him in the night, as if he had been a

malefactor or evil-doer, and drag him away to the civil judge; his back is smitten, his face is spit on, his head torn and pricked with thorns, sentence is passed upon him, he is condemned and scourged; and when he cannot bear his own cross, (his body, being a true human body, is so faint and infeebled,) it is accounted a favour that he gets one Simon to help him to bear it, or to bear it after him; which is not marked, to shew that they did him any kindness or courtesy beyond others, but to hold forth the low and weak condition he was brought into, that he was not able to bear it himself; and not only so, but he must come to death, and to the shameful and cursed death of the cross; he dies very quickly, further to point forth his lowness, which was such that death overcame him sooner than the others, because he had no other things to wrestle with. 3. In his name he suffered, he was reproached, nodded at with the head, reviled, mocked, sent about as a spectacle from Pilate to Herod, back again from Herod to Pilate: He had a scarlet robe put on him in derision; the high-priests also derided him; the Jews wag the head at him, and count him not at all worthy to live, and therefore prefer a robber and murderer to him. 4. Consider his inward sufferings, O! these were far more piercing; justice laid claim to his soul, *the sorrows of hell compassed him; his soul is heavy unto the death; he sweats blood*, and crys, *If it be possible that that* wrathful *cup might pass from him;* and on the cross with a pitiful voice, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Which, by the way, is not an expression of any quarrelling complaint or discouragement, but of sinless nature, when he is arraigned and made to stand before the tribunal of God, affected with the horror of divine wrath, and cannot easily endure, that there should be a cloud betwixt God and him: But these soul-sufferings of his, will fall in to be spoken to more particularly afterwards, only we see here, that he was afflicted, and in his

his sufferings was greatly humbled and brought very low. And indeed considering that all the elects sins were laid upon him, and that justice was exacting all their debt of him, he could not be otherways but behoved to be exceedingly afflicted and sore distressed.

4thly, *Observe*, That as much as our Lord suffered, yet he did most willingly and chearfully undergo it all. He thwarted not with it, he repented not, he grudged not, flinched not, nor drew back; or, which is to the same purpose, our Lord Jesus in his lowest humiliation and affliction, and all along in his deepest suffering shewed exceeding great willingness, desirousness and heartsomeness: That word was always true of him, *I delight to do thy will, O my God:* And the prophet holds forth this as a great wonder, that though he was oppressed and afflicted, *yet he opened not his mouth.* We shall for clearing of this, propose these considerations, 1. In his undertaking of the engagement, his willingness appears. When burnt offerings and sacrifices would not do it, and when there was no obligation on him to do what he did, then comes in his free offer and consent, and that with delight, Psal. xl. *Then said I, Lo I come; in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God:* Where we see there was no extorting of a consent from the Mediator against his will, but a delightsome offering of it; and that word of his, Prov. viii. is very remarkable to this purpose, *Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delight was with the sons of men:* The contemplation and fore-sight of his incarnation and suffering for the elect, was (to speak so) refreshing to him, and made him leap as it were for joy, ere the world was made, and before they had a being. 2. Consider the great things that he undertook. Not only to be man, but a poor mean man: It had been much for him to have humbled himself to be monarch of the whole world, as his *vain* and *prophane* pretended Vicar the Pope of Rome

Rome claims to be; yet he not only will not be ſo, but *emptied himſelf*, and became *a worm* in a manner, *and no man, an out-caſt of the people:* O! ſuch a proof of his love! And when he took the cup, that bitter cup, and ſaid, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me*, leaſt it ſhould ſeem a thwarting with the work of redemption, and with his Father's will therein, he ſays, let it come, Father, *not my will, but thine be done.* 3. Conſider the manner of his ſuffering, and we ſhall ſee a further proof of his willingneſs. How little pains takes he to eſcape them? yea, when Peter labours to diſuade him, Matt. xvi. from ſuffering, he diſdains and rejects the ſuggeſtion with a ſevere check, *Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me, thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but of men:* And when his diſciples ſaid to him, (reſolving to go up again to Judea) John xi. 8. *Maſter, the Jews of late ſought to ſtone thee, and wilt thou go thither again?* he will needs go up notwithſtanding; and when they were going up to Jeruſalem, Mark x. 32. *He went before* all the reſt, to wit, at a ſwift pace; and Luke xii. 50. he ſays, *I have a baptiſm to be baptiſed with, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed?* Never did men long ſo much for their marriage day, and for the day of their triumph, as our Lord Jeſus did to get the elects debt payed, and their diſcharge extracted and drawn out. 4. Conſider his eaſineſs and willingneſs to be taken. *He* goes forth, John xviii. to meet the band of ſoldiers that came with the traitor to apprehend him, and aſks them again and again, *whom ſeek ye?* And ſays as often, *I am he:* He will not ſuffer his diſciples to draw a ſword in his defence, Matt. xxvi. but when Peter drew his ſword, he bid him *put it up again*, for he could have *commanded more than twelve legions of angels:* but it behoved him now to ſuffer, he came for another end than to oppoſe his ſufferings: And hence he ſays, John x. *No man takes my life from me*,

me, but I lay it down of myself, and have power to take it up again: It was neither Judas nor Pilate that took his life against his will, but he willingly laid it down; for either the elect behoved to die, or he himself: And since it is so, as if he had said, then behold here is my life, take it, and I will lay it down, that they, poor creatures, may go free; *and therefore does my Father love me*, says he, *because I lay down my life for my sheep*; not because it is taken from me against my will, but because I willingly and of myself lay it down; and when he is brought before Pilate and Herod, and they lay many things to his charge, Matt. xxvi. 6. and Mark xv. *He held his peace*, so that it is said, that Pilate *marvelled*, Matt. xv. he thought that he could not but have much to say for himself, as all men in such a case use to have, but he answered nothing; or as it is in the text, *Yet he opened not his mouth*; the reason was, because he could not divert the course of justice, nor mar the Lord's design in the work of the elects redemption through his death and sufferings. He came not into the world, to accuse Pilate or the Jews, and to justify himself, though now and then, for the conviction of enemies, and for his own necessary vindication, he dropt a word, but being engaged for the elect, he will needs perform all that justice called for; and in this willingness he hath a respect to two things, 1. To the Father's satisfaction; for his willing suffering is that which makes it a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to him. 2. To the elects consolation, that they may know they had a willing Saviour that had no necessity laid on him to satisfy, but satisfied willingly. And from these two arises a third, even the glory of the Mediator's satisfaction, for herein his love to the elect shines brightly; *I lay down my life for my sheep*; this is the heart-alluring commendation of his sufferings, that with delight and pleasure he underwent them, as if he had been purchasing a kingdom to himself.

Now,

Now, to come to the uſe of all theſe doctrines; when they with the things contained in them are compared, we profeſs we cannot tell you what excellent uſes they yield. Would to God! we were all in ſuch a frame as the eunuch was in, when he read this ſcripture (as the divine hiſtorian gives us an account, Acts viii. 32. and forward) who when Philip had begun to preach to him on this excellent ſubject, was ſo taken, that before the ſermon or diſcourſe was at an end, being holily impatient at any longer delay, he ſays to Philip, *Here is water, what hinders me to be baptized?* I ſay again, would to God, we were all in ſuch a frame, and that this were the fruit of ſuch a doctrine as this to many of you, nay, to all of you!

Uſe 1. Wonder, believers, at the exactneſs and infiniteneſs of the grace of God, and at the heart-affecting, and ſoul-raviſhing love of the Mediator! At grace in God that ſpared the debtor, and exacted payment from the Surety, the Son of his love. Exerciſe your love on the Mediator that paid ſo much, and ſo willingly and chearfully for you. If any ſubject be pertinent for our thoughts, while we are about to celebrate the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, certainly this is pertinent; concerning a crucified Chriſt inſtating himſelf in our room, to pay our debt, and doing this of his own accord, without the ſolicitation or interpoſing of any creature, and doing it withal ſo freely and chearfully. Was ever the like of this love heard of, for one, and more eſpecially for ſuch a one, to ſuffer ſo much and ſo chearfully, unrequired? We would have you confirmed in the faith of this great and ſweet truth, that he had never better will, nay, never ſo good will to eat, as he had to ſuffer, and ſatisfy juſtice for you, though at a dear rate. He ſays, John iv. *It was his meat to do the Father's will that ſent him, and to finiſh his work.* Have ye ſuitable thoughts of his love when ye read the goſpel? Have ye ſeen him in the word ſtanding before Pilate in your room, not

not answering when he is accused, and Pilate marvelling at his silence? And did Pilate marvel, knowing, and being convinced of his innocency? And have ye never marvelled, or marvelled but a very little? Sure, your little marvelling at his silence, is the more sadly marvellous, that the cause of his silence, when he was charged with your iniquities, with such and such a piece of your miscarriage, with such a vain and roving heart, with such a wanton look, with such a profane or idle word of yours, with the horrid sin of your having so abused, slighted, and neglected him, &c. that the cause, I say, of his silence at such a terrible accusation and charge, and not vindicating himself, or saying, These faults, miscarriages, and transgressions are not mine, as he might have done, was pure love to you. O! Is not this strange, and yet most true? Then wonder more at it.

Use 2. Here is strong consolation to believers, and wonderful wisdom in the rise and conveyance of it, in uniting, justice and love; out of which the consolation springs; justice exacting upon, and distressing the Son of God, and he satisfying justice so fully, that tho' all the elect had satisfied eternally in hell, it had not been made to shine so splendidly and gloriously; justice also on the Mediator's part in yielding and giving satisfaction, tho' it should oppress and break soul and body: And yet love, both on the Father's and Mediator's side; on the Father's side there is love, in finding out this way of satisfaction to his own justice, when there was no cure, but by the wounding of his own Son; and yet he was content rather to wound him, than that the elect should suffer, and be wounded eternally; and love on the Mediator's side, who willingly yields, and undertakes their debt, and will not hide his face from shame and spitting. What may not the believer expect from God, when he spared not his own Son for him? And what may he expect from Christ, who spared not

himself for his sake? Who is that good Shepherd, that laid down his life for the sheep, and held his tongue, and quarrelled not with those that smote him? Will he quarrel then with a poor sinner coming to him, and pleading for the benefit of his satisfaction? No certainly; but as the word is, Zeph. iii. 17. *He will rest in his love*, or as the word signifies, *He will be dumb or silent in his love*; he will not upbraid thee, nor throw up thy former miscarriages; he will not say reproachfully to thee, Where wast thou so long playing the prodigal? He is better content with thy recovery, than ever he was discontent, or ill pleased with all the wrong thou didst unto him.

Use 3. This word of doctrine lays down the ground whereupon a sinner sensible of sin, may build his expectation of peace with God. The transaction concluded and agreed upon, is the ground of his coming, and the exacting of the price according to the transaction, is the ground of his expectation of the benefits of Christ's purchase. And there is justice for it, as the apostle intimates, Rom. viii. 34, 35. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again*, &c. And upon this follows the believing soul's triumph. O! But there is much need to be throughly acquainted with the mutual relations that are betwixt Christ and the believing sinner, with the ground of their approaching to him, and with the good they are to expect through him.

Use 4. This word is made use of, 1 Pet. ii. 21. to give us a notable and non-such pattern of patience. *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps;* he did bear all wrongs patiently, and put them up quietly, and *opened not his mouth*; he could have told Pilate and Caiaphas what they were, but he spoke not a word but one to the high-priest, notwithstanding all his provoking carriage,

riage, and a very meek one too, *If I have ſpoken evil, bear witneſs of the evil, and if well, why, ſmiteſt thou me?* Among other copies that Chriſt hath given, take this for one, make him a copy and pattern for patience. It is to be regretted, that people are ſo unlike to Chriſt in this reſpect; they think it a diſdainful thing to put up an affront, but will ſcorn and banter at it. But, what if Jeſus Chriſt had been of that temper and diſpoſition? (if it be fit to make ſuch a ſuppoſition) ye had been without a Redeemer, and had periſhed for ever. When he calls you to be followers of him, and to ſuffer patiently, as he did, tho' moſt unjuſtly, as to men; for you to think or ſay that you ſcorn it, and that ye are not ſo mean-ſpirited; what is it elſe, but to think, and to ſay on the matter, that the bleſſed Jeſus in his patient and ſilent carriage under all the injuries that he ſuffered, though very unjuſtly, from men, ſhewed himſelf to be of a mean and low ſpirit, and that ye diſdain to follow his way. O! intollerable, proud, and blaſphemous reflection! The many conteſts, the many high reſentments of wrongs done to them, the great grudging, fretting, and foaming that there are in Chriſtians, ſay plainly, that there is little of the meek and patient ſpirit of Chriſt in, and amongſt us; and that many of us *know not what ſpirit we are of.*

SERMON XXIX.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 8.

Verſe 8. *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment, and who ſhall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.*

WE need not tell you of whom the prophet is ſpeaking here, every verſe, and every word almoſt do make it manifeſt, that he ſpeaks of Chriſt the Saviour, and indeed it can be applied to none other. It is the ſame verſe, Acts viii. 24. from which Philip proceeds to preach Chriſt to the eunuch. The prophet hath been largely holding forth Chriſt's ſufferings in the former verſe, and we conceive he alſo takes occaſion to ſpeak of Chriſt's exaltation and deliverance from theſe ſufferings. It is true, as if he had ſaid, *He was brought to priſon and judgment.* He was indeed ſtraitned and laid very low, but priſon and judgment did not keep him; *He was taken*, or as the word is, *he was lifted up* from both; and as deſpicable as he was in mens eyes, yet he was not ſo in himſelf; for *who ſhall declare his generation?* There is a wonderfulneſs in him who ſuffered that cannot be reached, but muſt be left with admiration. And a wonderful glory whereunto he was after his humiliation exalted; and there is a reaſon of this given for preventing of offence. If any ſhould ſay, How then could he ſuffer, and be brought ſo low in his ſufferings if he was ſo glorious a perſon? He anſwers, It is true,

true, that *he was caſt off out of the land of the living*, but for no offence in himſelf, but for the tranſgreſſion of God's elect *was he ſtricken*; or, as the word is, *The ſtroke was upon him*; and this, as we conceive, is given as a reaſon of his exaltation. Becauſe in the loweſt ſteps of his humiliation, he condeſcended to fulfil his engagement to the Father, in ſatisfying juſtice for the ſins of the elect, according to that of, John x. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again*; becauſe, according to his engagement, he ſuffered for the ſins of his elect people, therefore he could not but have a comfortable and glorious deliverance.

There are theſe three things in the words, 1. Somewhat aſſerted concerning Chriſt Jeſus, *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment.* 2. Something hinted which cannot be expreſſed, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* 3. There is a reaſon given in reference to both, *For he was cut off*, &c. which we ſhall expound when we come to it.

For the *firſt*, *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment:* We conceive theſe words have a reſpect both to his humiliation, and to his deliverance from it; the one being clearly ſuppoſed, that he was in priſon, or ſtraits, and brought to judgment; and the other being expreſſed, that he was brought from priſon and from judgment. 1. *Priſon* here may be taken generally for any ſtrait, or preſſure that one may be brought into, which we conceive both the words, and the prophet's ſcope will clear; Chriſt never having been properly in priſon, at leaſt not for any conſiderable time, but was ſtraitned and ſore diſtreſſed; he was taken from priſon and judgment, being in his humiliation, and in his ſufferings in the room of the elect purſued by the law and juſtice of God. 2. *Judgment* is taken paſſively, for judgments paſt on him, and it reſpects not only the procedure of Pilate, or of the chief prieſt, and of the ſcribes and Phariſees, but

but a judicial proceſs, which the juſtice of God led againſt him, in which reſpect he anſwered (as the words after will clear) for the ſins of God's people. The word, *He was taken*, ſometimes ſignifies to deliver, as a captive is delivered, when he is taken from him that took him captive, as it is, Iſaiah xlix. 24. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?* To which the Lord anſwers, *It*, or *he ſhall be taken.*

So then, the ſcope or meaning of the words is, that the prophet ſubjoins a narration of Chriſt's exaltation upon finiſhing of his humiliation, as it is uſual in the ſcripture to put theſe together, and in this order, as namely, Phil. ii. 8, 9. 'He humbled himſelf, 'and became obedient unto death, even the death of 'the croſs; wherefore God hath highly exalted him, 'and given him a name, *&c*'. He was exceedingly ſtraitned and put to a pinch for the elects ſins, but death had no dominion over him; he had a glorious deliverance; he was taken out and ſet free from the priſon, or ſtraits wherein he was held, and from thoſe judgments that paſſed upon him. The reaſon of the expoſition is drawn from the plain meaning of the words, which muſt run thus, *He was taken from judgment*, the very ſame which is in the following expreſſion, *He was cut off out of the land of the living*, that being the ordinary ſignification of the prepoſition *from;* the meaning muſt be this, that he was taken out of the condition wherein he was: It agrees alſo beſt with the ſcope of the very next words, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* Wherein he propoſeth an admirable aggravation of this delivery.

The ſecond thing hath a connexion with the former, and therefore attend to a word or two for the clearing of it. What to underſtand by generation here, is ſomewhat difficult to determine, the word in the original having ſeveral meanings, yet generally it reſpects one or the other of theſe two, as it is applied

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to Chriſt, 1*ſt*, Either the time paſt, and ſo it is uſed by many, to expreſs and hold forth Chriſt's Godhead, and ſo the meaning is, tho' he was brought very low, yet he was, and is the eternal Son of God: Or, 2. (as commonly it is taken) it reſpects the time to come, and ſo the meaning is, who ſhall declare his duration, or continuance? Generation is often taken thus in ſcripture for the continuance of an age, and of one age following another ſucceſſively, as Joſhua xxii. *This altar ſhall be a witneſs to the generations to come.* So then, the meaning is, he was once low, but God exalted him, and brought him through all his ſufferings; and who ſhall declare this duration, or continuance of his exaltation? As it is, Phil. ii. 8, 9. *He humbled himſelf*, &c. *Therefore God hath highly exalted him.* As his humiliation was low, ſo his exaltation was ineffable, it cannot be declared, nor adequately conceived, the continuance of it being for ever. There is no inconſiſtency betwixt theſe two expoſitions; his duration or continuance after his ſufferings, neceſſarily preſuppoſing his Godhead, brought in here, partly to ſhew the wonderfulneſs of his ſuffering, it being God that ſuffered; for the man that ſuffered was God; partly to ſhew Chriſt's glory, who notwithſtanding of his ſuffering, was brought through it, and glorioufly exalted. And theſe reaſons make it evident, 1. Whatever theſe words do ſignify, *Who ſhall declare his age or generation?* Yet certainly it is ſomething that can be ſpoken of no other, but of Chriſt, and that agrees to him ſo, as it agrees to no other. Now if we look ſimply to the eternity of his duration or continuance, that agrees to all the elect, and will agree to all men at the reſurrection; therefore the prophet muſt have reſpect here to his continuance and duration as he is God. 2. Becauſe, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* is brought in here, to ſhew the ineffableneſs of it, and ſo to make his ſufferings the more wonderful; it was he ſuffered, whoſe con-

continuance cannot be declared. 3. It is ſuch a continuance as is brought in to ſhew a reaſon why death could not have dominion over him, nor keep him, according to that, Rom. i. 4. *He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the ſpirit of holineſs, by his reſurrection from the dead;* and the reaſon ſubjoined to this will ſome way clear it; for *he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken;* thereby inſinuating, that becauſe of the great work which he had to do, there behoved to be ſome ſingularneſs in the perſon that did the work, who, notwithſtanding of the greatneſs and difficultneſs of it, came through it, and was exalted. However it be, the prophet's ſcope being to ſet forth Chriſt's humiliation and exaltation, his humiliation before, and his exaltation after, which is, as we ſaid, ordinary in ſcripture; we therefore conceive the meaning we have given is ſafe, and agreeable to the prophet's ſcope.

We may obſerve *three* things from the firſt part of the words, 1. That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his performing the work of redemption was exceedingly ſtraitned and oppreſſed, or as the word is elſewhere rendered, bound up, and ſtrictly confined, as men who are in priſon. And by theſe ſtraitnings we mean not only, ſuch as he was brought into by men, whereof we ſpoke before, but eſpecially thoſe that were more inward; and being amongſt the laſt ſteps of his humiliation, more immediately preceding his exaltation, and ſpoken of as moſt wonderful, we conceive they look to thoſe preſſures that were upon his ſpirit; and we ſhall inſtance ſeveral places of ſcripture that ſerve to diſcover them to us. The firſt is that of John xii. 27, 28. *Now is my ſoul troubled, and what ſhall I ſay? Father, ſave me from this hour*; here our bleſſed Lord is troubled in ſpirit, and ſo pinched and hedged in, as in a priſon, that he is in a holy nonplus what to ſay. The *2d* ſcripture is, Matt. xxvi. 38. *My ſoul is*

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exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death, which is like the expreſſions uſed by the apoſtle, 2 Cor. xi. 8. [We were preſſed above meaſure, above ſtrength, inſomuch as we deſpaired of life, and we had the ſentence of death in ourſelves;] there was no deliverance obvious to human ſenſe; ſo is it here; wherein we are not only to conſider his ſoul-vexation, but that his ſoul-vexation was very great, extremely ſtraitning, vexing, and in a manner impriſoning to him. The 3*d* ſcripture is, Luke xxii. 24. [He being in an agony prayed more earneſtly, and his ſweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground;] there was ſuch a ſtriving, wreſtling, and conflicting, not with man without him, but with inward preſſures on his ſpirit, that he is like one engaged in a duel with a mighty combatant, ſore put to it, very far beyond any thing that we can conceive; ſo that *he ſweat great drops of blood*, and ſays, *Father, if thou be willing remove this cup from me; nevertheleſs, not my will but thine be done.* It is in Matthew, *If it be poſſible;* and thereafter, *If it be not poſſible*, which ſhews, there was no getting from the hold that law and juſtice had of him, till they were fully ſatisfied; and thoſe dreadful words uttered by him on the croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Theſe words diſcover that from the ſinleſs human nature of Chriſt, the comfortable and joyful influence of the Godhead for a time was in a great meaſure ſuſpended, (though the ſuſtaining power thereof was exerciſed mightily on him;) ſo that he looks on himſelf ſomeway as forſaken and left in the hand of the curſe.

To clear this a little, we would conſider theſe preſſures that were on our Lord's ſpirit, 1*ſt*, In reſpect of their cauſe. 2*dly*, In reſpect of their effects.

1*ſt*, In reſpect of their cauſe; there is upon the one part, his undertaking for the elect as their ſurety; and God's juſtice purſuing and holding him confined on the other part, ſo that he cannot decline ſtanding at

the bar of juſtice; becauſe, as it is, verſe 6. the ſins of all the elect met upon him; and he having, as it is, verſe 7. the bitter cup in his hand, which by his engagement he was obliged to drink, he ſtands there by the decree of God, and by the covenant of redemption, bound to ſatisfy; and being purſued by wrath and juſtice, theſe words come out of his mouth, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup depart from me, yet not my will, but thine be done;* his engagement binding him, and wrath purſuing him, he ſtands betwixt theſe two as a priſoner; and upon theſe two, *the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all;* there was a demand made, and he anſwered for them; for in theſe verſes, the ſteps of our Lord's humiliation are deſcribed out in a legal way, as before the bar of God's tribunal.

2*dly*, This being our Lord's condition, we ſhall conſider the effects of this preſſure of ſpirit, which may be done in theſe *four* heads. 1. He was under the ſenſe of great ſoul-pain, ſorrow, and trouble; for the cup of the wrath of God being bitter, which he was to drink, it could not but deeply ſting his holy human nature, which was the procuring cauſe of his agony, and that which made his ſoul ſorrowful, and brought out the bloody ſweat. 2. Beſide his grief and ſorrow, there was a holy horror; for conſidering the party that he had to do with, it was impoſſible it could be otherwiſe; impoſſible for a finite, though a ſinleſs creature, to look on an angry God, and on wrath poured forth into the cup, which it muſt needs drink, and not have a horror at it; it were not becoming the ſinleſs human nature of our bleſſed Lord, not to be afflicted with a holy and ſinleſs horror at that moſt bitter cup, which brought out that ſad cry, *Father, let this cup depart from me:* Which did not proceed from any diſlike he had to fulfil his engagement, or from any unwillingneſs, or unſuitable reſentment that he had ſo engaged himſelf, but from an apprehended ſinleſs diſproportionableneſs, to ſpeak ſo,

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in his finite, finleſs, human nature, to encounter with the wrath of his Father; to which though he moſt willingly yielded, yet in itſelf it was dreadful. 3. There was a ſtraitning, or holy fear, as if there had been in him a ſinleſs diſpute or debate, [What will become of this? Can a man get through this? (tho' he was God as well as man) How will this be borne? This looks as if death would get the victory;] Thus it is ſaid, Heb. v. 7. *In the days of his fleſh he offered up ſtrong cries and ſupplications with tears, and was heard in that he feared;* he put up ſtrong cries to be delivered, not from dying, but from the power of death, and was heard in that he feared, to ſhew a holy care to prevent death, could that have been, and a ſinleſs fear of it, leſt it ſhould ſwallow him up. 4. There was a pinching and ſtraitning from love to the Father, and to the doing of his will; and from love to the elect, and to their ſalvation, which puſhed him forward to perform and fulfil his engagement; accordingly, Luke xii. 50. he ſays, *I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned till it be accompliſhed*; and hence it was that thoſe words were uttered by him, *Father, not my will, but thine be done*; and therefore, though he had power to command twelve legions of angels for his relief, yet, if we may ſo ſpeak, love ſo binds his hands that he will not uſe his power for his own deliverance. But to guard this doctrine from miſtakes, take a fourfold advertiſement concerning this inward ſoul-pinching, which will help to clear ſomewhat of his ſoul-ſuffering that followeth. And 1. Think not that there was any ſinful or unſuitable confuſion or perturbation of mind in our Lord, ſuch as uſeth to be in us, there being no dreg of corruption in his mind to jumble or diſcompoſe his holy human nature. 2. Beware of thinking that there was any fretting or anxiety in him, or any diſcontentedneſs with the engagement; his expreſſions ſhew forth the contrary; for, ſaith he, *I could com-*

mand twelve legions of angels, yet he would not do it. 3. Think not that there was any jealousy in him of the Father's love; though there was a suspension of the comfortable and joyful sense of it, yet there was not the least loosing of the faith of it, as is clear by his doubling of these words, *My God, my God*, when in his saddest distress he cried out as being forsaken. 4. Ye should not look on this, as holding forth any distrust as to the event. I have, saith he, power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again; and I will rise again the third day; he knew that the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and him stood firm and sure: But it is the consideration of God's now coming as the party to exact the elects debt of him, and his standing at the bar to answer for it, which puts him in this agony; and though considering Christ as man personally united to the Godhead (whereby he was kept from sinking) he had no distrust to be carried through; yet considering him as man suffering, and that (to speak so with reverence in such a divine subject) there was an eclipse of that sensible joy that proceeded from the two natures together, it is not possible to conceive of Christ in this condition, but wrath and anger must be some way dreadful or terrible to him.

The uses are 1*st*, To evidence the truth of what our Lord suffered, and how severely he was pinched and straitned. It was not the scribes and Pharisees pursuing him, nor the soldiers buffeting and mocking of him, and carrying him to the high-priest's hall, and from Pilate to Herod, and back again, that so much troubled him; but there was a higher hand that he had to look to, and a judge and court to which he was now answering, that was very above theirs.

And therefore, as a 2*d* use of the doctrine, Think it not such a light thing (as many do) to satisfy justice, or to give God a ransom for souls. Ye see how it straitned the Surety, and put him as in a prison.

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Unspeakably deceived are they who think that two or three formal words will make their peace with God, and that they will slip into heaven; be not carried away with this delusion, but consider seriously what will become of you, if ye be put to answer for your own debt, when he handled the Surety, his own Son, so roughly. Ye that will sleep on, and scorn to let any word prick you, the justice of God shall prick you, and put you to straits, out of which ye shall not be able to extricate yourselves; and he shall appear like everlasting burning, when the great day of his wrath comes, and when it shall be said by you, *Who can stand before it?* or abide it? It were good that ye who are most atheistical, and who with a sort of triumph and gallantry will needs destroy yourselves, would lay this to heart, and remember that the day comes when ye will be brought to this bar; and gravely consider what a hell this will be, to have the desperateness of the deliverance sealed up in your consciences; and the evidences of God's hatred, and those aggravations that our Lord's holy nature could not admit of, in your bosom. When wrath meets with corruption, and corruption with wrath, and when these mingle, how dreadful will your case be!

3*dly*, Let believers see here how they are obliged to Christ; consider what he hath paid, and what the satisfaction of justice for you cost him; men are ready to think that it was an easy thing to satisfy justice, and *to drink of the brook by the way;* but if sinners were sensible of challenges for sin, and if they had they had the arrows of the Almighty drinking up their spirits, they would think otherwise of Christ's drinking up the cup of wrath for them, not leaving so much as one drop of it. It is but the threatnings with some drops of it that any of you meet within your soul-exercises. O! believing sinners, are ye not then eternally obliged to Christ, who drank up this cup of wrath for you?

4*thly*,

4thly, There is notable conſolation here to poor ſouls that would fain make uſe of Chriſt, as, 1. That Chriſt hath ſtepped through this deep river, or rather ſea before them; and if the cup come into their hand, it is empty: Freedom from the wrath of God is a great conſolation, and yet it is the conſolation of them that are fled unto him for refuge. 2. It is comfortable to them in their comparatively petty ſtraits and difficulties, when they wot not what to do, when the law ſeizeth and juſtice purſueth, and when the conſcience accuſeth for ſin, to conſider that Chriſt was a priſoner before them. Though he had no accuſation for his own debt, yet he was accuſed for ours, that he might be a compaſſionate high prieſt, being made like to us, but without ſin; juſtice purſued him, the law arreſted him, wrath ſeized on him; ſo that when we are ſet upon by theſe, he will be tender of us, for he knows our frame, and that we cannot bear much; and therefore on this ground a believing ſinner may go with boldneſs to the throne of grace, becauſe Chriſt the ſurety who hath payed his debt, is there. It is a ſhame for believing ſinners to walk ſo dejectedly, even under thoſe things that are terrible, as if Chriſt had not gone through them before them and for them. 3. There is conſolation here when they are under any heavy croſs and difficulty: As there is alſo ground for patient and pleaſant bearing of it, becauſe it was another ſort of priſon that Chriſt was put in for them; ye may, I grant, lament over the long want of ſenſible preſence, it being natural to the believer to miſs it, and to long for it, but ye ſhould not be diſcouraged under the want of it, nor complain as the Lord's people do *lament*; *Is there any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow?* But ſubmiſſively and contentedly bear it without fretting, ſeeing our Lord bare ſo much for you.

5thly, There is here a notable encouragement to believe, and a notable ground for the believer to expect

pect freedom from ſin, and from the puniſhment that it deſerveth, becauſe Chriſt payed dear for it. Wherefore was all this ſuffering, but to pay the believer's debt? But when we come to ſpeak of his deliverance, it will clear this more.

2. While it is ſaid, that *he was brought from judgment*, which ſuppoſes and implies, that he was once at, or under judgment, even the judgment of God, who is his great party all along: *He laid on him the iniquity of us all;* and verſe 10. *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him:* He was the Creditor that cauſed him to be taken and arreſted; obſerve, that in all the ſoul-vexation, in all the preſſure of ſpirit that our Lord ſuſtained, he was ſtanding judicially before the bar of God, and was judicially proceeded againſt as the elects ſurety; there was no bringing Chriſt to judgment, had he not engaged to be a ſurety, and had not God laid on him our iniquities, for it was for no debt that he was owing himſelf, but for what by his engagement as the elects ſurety he came under, and was made liable to. That which I mean by his being brought to judgment, is not only that he ſuffered and was occaſionally condemned by a court of men, or by a human judicatory, which was rather like a tumultuary meeting, or a company of men in an uproar, than indeed a court; but whatever was before men, there was a legal and judicial procedure before God. For clearing thereof ye ſhould conſider, 1. The account whereon he ſuffered, and was brought before God's court of judgment, to ſpeak ſo: It was not for any thing that the ſcribes or Phariſees, or Pilate had to lay to his charge; it was envy in them, the former at leaſt, that moved them in what they did; but the next words tell us, what it was, *For the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.* The prieſts and people took no heed of this, but this was indeed the ground of his judicial arraignment before God; the elect were in their ſins, and he by the covenant of redemption

redemption ſtood liable for their debt, becauſe he had undertaken for them as their ſurety. 2. Conſider who was his great party in his ſufferings; it was not Pilate and the Jews, he cared not ſo much for them, but it is God, and therefore he crys, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And therefore he makes his addreſs to God, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me;* he cared not for anſwering them, but looks to a higher hand, and upon himſelf as ſtanding before another tribunal; therefore it is ſaid, ver. 10. *Yet it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him;* he looked not to Pilate, but to the Lord purſuing him. 3. Conſider our Lord's ſubmiſſion to his being brought to judgment, not only nor chiefly before men, but before God; therefore ſays he, John xii. 48. *Father, ſave me from this hour; but for this cauſe came I to this hour:* Come then Father and let us reckon; he looks not only to the preſent diſpenſation, but alſo to the ground whence it came, and to the end that God had in it: *For this cauſe came I unto this hour*, even to have my ſoul troubled, and to be put to anſwer for the debt of my elect people according to my engagement; *Lo, I come*, ſaith he, in that often cited fortieth Pſalm, *in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will.* Conſider *4thly*, The effects of his bringing to judgment; a ſentence paſſes, 1 Tim. iii. ult. [Great is the myſtery of godlineſs, God manifeſted in the fleſh, juſtified in the ſpirit,] not before Pilate, but in God's court; having ſatisfied for the elects debt according to his undertaking, he gets an abſolution, which reaches not only to himſelf, but to all them whoſe perſons he ſuſtained, as is clear, 2 Cor. v. ult. [He was made ſin for us who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him] the elects obtaining eternal redemption and abſolution by his death, and the reſpect that his ſatisfaction had to their juſtification, clears that he ſtood there judicially at the bar of God in their name to anſwer

ſwer for them. And there are three ſteps of this his judicial anſwer, 1. He gets the bill of the elects debt put in his hand; [though there was no guile in his mouth, yet it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, he laid on him the iniquity of us all; *and* for the iniquity of my people was he ſtricken,] theſe are the perſons that he undertook for, and for their debt he anſwers; the verity of the fact is clear, for they are under guilt; the law's claim is clear, for it is broken, and upon this the bill is put in his hand: Hence it is ſaid, [he died for us, he was made ſin for us, *and* he died for our ſins.] 2. As the bill is put in his hand, ſo a ſentence paſſes accordingly, he is found liable to the elects debt, and muſt anſwer for it, as the former word is, [It was exacted on him, *and* 2 Cor. v. ult. He was made ſin for us, *and* Gal. iii. 13. He was made a curſe for us,] that is, by the ſentence of juſtice he is charged to bear the curſe. 3. The ſentence is executed as it was paſt, the cup is put in his hand, and not only is he charged with, and doomed to the curſe; but actually he is made a curſe, and all this as judicially ſuſtaining the perſons of the elect, as their Bondſman and Surety.

Here we have ſome ſweet and profitable uſes. 1. See here and underſtand the way of redemption contrived, ſo as it runs on mercy and juſtice, mercy to the elect, and juſtice to the Surety, their debt being fully exacted of him.

2. It learns us how to eſtabliſh our faith, and alſo gives us ground of believing. But to make it diſtinct; juſtice muſt be ſatisfied, without which no mercy could be ſhewed to the ſinner, and God hath laid down the way by the Surety's interpoſing; even as it is among men, the Bondſman being impriſoned and ſatisfying, is the debtor's liberty; and as God hath condeſcended to deal with us by way of covenant, ſo he condeſcended in the covenant of redemption to proceed legally and judicially with Chriſt, that we might

have the clearer underſtanding to make application of it.

2. Are there any here that look for redemption through Chriſt, and hope that their ſins were in the roll given to him; O! how warming ſhould this be to your hearts? And how ſhould it make them to melt in love and godly ſorrow, to behold Chriſt ſtanding at the bar of juſtice, and that for you? O! what an aſpect would his ſufferings have on us, if we were clear about our intereſt in him, and could hear him in our name, ſaying, [Father, here am I, if thou take me, let theſe go; thy will be done, for this cauſe came I here to anſwer for my peoples debt, to own the charge given in againſt them, and to undergo thy ſentence for them; *then ſays juſtice*, thou muſt pay their debt; content, *ſays he*, here am I; *and ſo* he gives his back to the ſmiter and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hides not his face from ſhame and ſpitting.] If we were clear that our ſhare was there, and that our iniquities came in among the reſt to make up the bill, and if we could diſcern him aright ſo ſtraitned in ſatisfying for us, would we not think ourſelves eternally obliged to him, to hate ſin, and to *glorify him in our bodies and ſpirits which are his?* As it is, 1 Cor. vi. ult. If indeed ye be Chriſt's (as ye profeſs yourſelves to be) he pays dear for you; and if ſo, will not this lie upon you as a juſt debt to him, to glorify him in your bodies, and in your ſpirits? For both in body and ſpirit he payed for you.

4. It is a notable ground of conſolation to believers againſt diffidence and fear to appear before the throne of God; becauſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath been before us, and in our name, hath anſwered for us to the full, and hath ſatisfied all that juſtice could crave of us. What wakens terror at death, and makes the thoughts of Chriſt's appearing to be dreadful, but our looking on our appearing at the bar of God? But it

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is a comfort to us, that Christ our Surety was brought to prison and to judgment, and was also brought from both; yea which is more, and without which the consolation is but divided, he was brought to both for us, and he was also brought from both as our Surety, as Surety for all them that betake themselves by faith to him: He was carried to prison and to judgment as Surety for the elect, and he was pursued as their Surety, and therefore his payment of the debt as Surety must be accepted in the name of them, for whom he payed the debt: Our Lord Jesus not only died and was laid in the grave, but he went further, he was even at the bar of justice exacted upon and sentenced, and the sentence executed upon him, else, woe had been unto us. On this ground is that triumph, Rom. viii. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies: Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea rather who is risen again*, &c. and it is said, Rom. vii. That *we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held;* the law had us in prison, and the door bolted against us, and had laid us in irons, but our Lord came, and (as Sampson did in another case) carried the gates and bars to the hill-top, *He spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed openly over them on the cross*, so that now, *the prince of this world is judged: These are the true and faithful sayings of God:* We have through Christ access, and may *with boldness come to the throne of grace*, having him an *high-priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all things tempted like as we are:* He knew not only what it was to be hungry and thirsty and weary, to be pained, and to die; but he knew what it was to come before the terrible tribunal of God, and to be arraigned for sin, though not for his own sin, and what it was to be sentenced and to meet with wrath; which gives to sinners a safe and refreshing shelter under him, as under the shadow of a great

rock in a weary land. This is the great deſign of the goſpel, to make offer of the benefit of theſe ſufferings to you, and to pray you in Chriſt's ſtead to be reconciled to God. Now may God himſelf perſuade you to it!

SERMON XXX.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 8.

Verſe 8. *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment, and who ſhall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.*

EVERY ſtep of Chriſt's way to ſinners, and every word whereby it is expreſt, is wonderful: And therefore it is no marvel that the prophet doth by way of admiration put in this word, *And who ſhall declare his generation?* We ſhewed you that we conceive theſe words to be thoſe that expreſs the prophet's turning of himſelf from Chriſt's humiliation to his exaltation: He hath inſiſted long in ſetting forth his wonderful abaſement, and humiliation, which theſe words import, *He was brought from priſon and from judgment:* Which look not only to his external impriſonment, and to his coming to judgment before men, but alſo, mainly and principally, to the ſtraits that he was brought into, and his arraignment before God's tribunal, and ſo to the cauſe of his ſuffering, to wit, *for the tranſgreſſion of his people*, as the words following hold forth, which was not the cauſe of his cenſure before men, but the procuring cauſe of what he met with from, and before God.

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But though he was brought to priſon and to judgment, to death and to the grave, yet they did not, they could not detain him; *He was taken*, or as the word ſignifies, he was lift up *from priſon and from judgment*, being the ſame word that followeth, *He was cut off out of the land of the living*, which ſuppoſes a turn and change from his humiliation to his exaltation, and theſe words, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* ſet forth the unconceivable and unexpreſſible glory that Chriſt is exalted unto. So Acts viii. 33, 35. where theſe words are cited, it is ſaid, *In his humiliation his judgment was taken away:* That is, in the loweſt ſtep of his humiliation, his judgment, or that to which he was adjudged, was taken from him, and he was declared free. However, ſince in theſe words our Lord's humiliation is implied, and his exaltation expreſſed as following on it, we think it ſafeſt to underſtand it ſo. The words put together hold forth the high degree of Chriſt's glorious exaltation, ſo as his generation cannot be declared; *He was taken from priſon and from judgment*, and glorioufly exalted in another manner, and to another degree of glory than either angels or believers are, or can be capable of: For he that is exalted is God, whoſe generation cannot be declared; 'death having no more dominion 'over him,' and he 'having the keys of hell and of 'death:' In a word, we take this, 'Who ſhall de-'clare his generation?' moſt immediately to relate to Chriſt's exaltation as Mediator, and to the glory wherewith he was inveſted, and to the dominion that he hath over all creatures; yet conſidering that the prophet's ſcope is to ſet forth this as wonderful; and conſidering that the firſt ſtep of his exaltation is his reſurrection, *whereby*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. i. 4. *he was declared to be the Son of God with power;* his reſurrection being ſingular in this reſpect, that he roſe by his own power; and conſidering that Acts viii. 35. Philip, began to preach to the eunuch Jeſus Chriſt

Christ as the object of faith: We think it reasonable to conceive, that he preached Christ to be God, from this text, so as the eunuch might have a solid foundation for his faith; and also answer the scope, which is to set forth the wonderfulness of Christ's love to elect sinners, who being God, yet condescended to come thus low for saving of them. We may take in his Godhead immediately, from which as the former steps of his humiliation received worth and efficacy, so he was thereby sustained and born up under all those sufferings whereby his people are saved.

From the *first* and *second* expressions put together, we shall draw *three doctrines* relating to three main articles of faith.

The 1. whereof is this, That our Lord had a deliverance from, and victory over the lowest and most pinching parts of his humiliation and suffering; so that though he was at prison and judgment, yet he was lift up from both, and had a glorious deliverance. This takes in three things, which the same grounds will confirm, 1. That in his lowest estate and steps of humiliation, he was sustained, and carried through; so that all the assaults which he was put to endure and encounter with from all his enemies, wicked men and devils, did not overcome him. 2. That as he in himself was born through and sustained; So in respect of God's bar at which he was arraigned, he was absolved and set free: He so came through by paying of the debt, that he had an absolution, as it is, 1 Tim. iii. ult. *Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit:* Our blessed Lord Jesus being sustained by the power of his Godhead, was carried through in his sufferings, payed the elects debt, and received the sentence of absolution, even as a person (to speak with reverence in such a subject) having payed the debt for which he was imprisoned, is absolved and set free. 3. It takes in our Lord's actual delivery, he not only received the sen-

sentence of absolution, but was actually set free; so that as he was pleased to put himself in prison and in straits for us, so he was brought from every step of his humiliation, *from prison and from judgment*, from death and from the grave; *he nailed the hand-writing which was against us to his cross*, (as the apostle saith, Col. ii. 14, 15.) *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it:* And as it is, 1 Cor. xv. at the close, he took the sting from death, disarmed it, and trode upon it: And there was necessity for this, even such necessity, that it was impossible it could be otherways, as we have it, Acts ii. 24. *It was impossible that he could be holden of death.* This will be clear if we consider these things, 1. The person that suffered, he was not an ordinary, nay, nor a meer man, but God man; as is clear, Acts ii. 27. cited out of Psal. xvi. where it is said, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy One to see corruption.* 2. The end of Christ's sufferings, which was to satisfie for the debt, of his people, there having been no reckoning on his score or account, he being still in God's favour, and his holy One in whom his soul delighted all along his sufferings: His sufferings being for the sins of his elect, and he being to make application of his satisfaction, and of the purchase made thereby to the elect for whom he suffered and purchased these things, by his intercession; there was a necessity that he should get the victory of all, otherways he should not have been a perfect and complete Saviour, *Able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him*, as the apostle speaks, Heb. vii. 25. *But such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.* 3. It is clear also, if we consider the nature of the covenant, and of the promises made to him therein, upon his engaging and undertaking for the elect, as particularly verse 10. of this chapter,

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'He shall see his seed, and prolong his days, his 'duration shall be for ever; the pleasure of the Lord 'shall prosper in his hand, and I will divide him a 'portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil 'with the strong:' Our Lord's exaltation and victory over death being on the Lord's part conditioned to him the Mediator, as well as he engaged to suffer, hence it is said, Psal. cx. 'He shall drink of the brook 'in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.'

The *uses* are *two*, The 1. whereof serves for clearing and confirming our faith in a fundamental article of Christianity, without which it were both needless for us to preach, and for you to hear or believe, and that is, that our Lord Jesus suffered, and also got the victory over suffering, that 'he was raised from the 'dead, and declared to be the Son of God with pow-'er;' intimating, that justice had gotten full satisfaction, in evidence and testimony whereof he was declared free, which is a main thing that believers have to believe, even that we have an exalted Christ, a raised up Saviour, who could not be detained by all the elects guilt in prison. 2. It serves to be matter of strong consolation, it puts life in all Christ's offices and qualifications, and in all the promises made to believers; to wit, that our Lord Jesus is a living Christ, 'over whom death had no dominion,' and he overcame it, 'now to die no more;' so that, as it is, Heb. vii. 25. 'He is able to save to the uttermost 'those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever 'liveth to make intercession for them:' There is nothing that a soul need or can desire, but it is to be had in him: And if we look to particular instances, much consolation will arise from this ground; for 1. Hath a believing sinner to do with accusations at the bar of justice? Is it not unspeakable consolation that their debt is paid? Hence it is said, Rom. viii. 33. 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's 'elect? It is God that justifies; who shall condemn?

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'It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again:' It is that which gives proof of complete payment of the elects debt, and defiance to any accusations to come against the believer to his prejudice, because Christ hath not only died, but is also risen; justice being well pleased with his satisfaction, he is let out of the prison. 2. If the believer hath to do with corruption, with the devil and with many enemies: Is it not strong consolation that our Lord is risen, and that 'the prince of this world is judged,' that Satan is trodden under foot; and that 'he shall and 'must reign till all his enemies be made his foot-stool?' 3. Our Lord's resurrection hath a twofold further consolation with it to believers. 1. It serves to be a ground for the exercising of faith on him, that as he is risen, Rom. vi. so may we expect that being spiritually dead with him to sin, we shall be *raised with him to newness of life*. 2. It is a pledge of believers exaltation and complete victory over death and the grave, and over all enemies; for Christ being raised as the common head of all believers who are his members, they by virtue of his resurrection, and by that same efficacy shall be raised; and it is impossible that they can lie under corruption. This is our great consolation who are believers, and live under the gospel, that we have not these things as a prophecy of things to come, but as a plain history of things in part done, and by and by to be completely accomplished. 4. It hath also in it consolation in respect of temporal difficulties. What are they all? they are not sure as Christ's were; and the day is coming when believers shall have deliverance from them all; and therefore since our Lord is risen, let no believers be afraid of any changes whatsoever.

2*dly*, *Observe*, That our Lord Jesus being raised up from his state of humiliation, is invested, and put in a most excellent and glorious condition, even such as the prophet cannot express, *Who can declare his gene-*

ration? ſaith he. Who can declare how glorious he is now? look to two or three ſcriptures to confirm this, 1. That Eph. i. 20, 21. 'He hath ſet him at his 'own right hand in the heavenly places, far above 'all principalities and powers, and might, and do-'minion, and every name that is named, not only in 'this world, but alſo in that which is to come, and 'hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be 'head over all things to the church.' Our Lord's throne is exalted far above angels and archangels, even out of ſight. The 2*d* is, Phil. ii. 9. where having ſpoken of his humiliation, it follows, 'Where-'fore God hath highly exalted him, and given him 'a name which is above every name, that at the 'name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in 'heaven, and, *&c.*' his exaltation is ſuch as hath a dominion and ſupremacy with it over every name; *He having*, as it is, Col. i. 18. *in all things the pre-eminency.* The 3*d* place is, Heb. viii. 1. 'Of the 'things which we have ſpoken, this is the ſum, we 'have ſuch an high prieſt who is ſet on the right hand 'of Majeſty in the heavens;' where Chriſt's exaltation is ſet forth to be ſuch as hath exalted him to the right-hand of the Majeſty on high.

Becauſe this is one of the great articles of our faith, to wit, 'That Chriſt roſe from death the third day, 'and aſcended into heaven, and is ſet down on the 'right hand of God;' we ſhall add a little more to clear it. And 1. We ſhould know that this exaltation of our Lord is not to be underſtood of his exaltation properly as he is God, in which reſpect there is no alteration in him; though his declarative glory was vailed for a time during his humiliation, yet in himſelf, as he was God, he was ſtill glorious and bleſſed over all. 2. When we ſpeak of Chriſt's exaltation as Mediator, and as man, we do not mean that his human nature hath loſt the eſſential properties of a creature; as if now when exalted he were wholly

wholly or only God; or as if the properties of the human nature were swallowed up in the Godhead; this would be inconsistent with his being true man, and would marr and obstruct our consolation exceedingly: But his exaltation consisteth, 1. In the manifestation and declaration of the person that was humbled and brought low, to be God omnipotent, omnipresent, all-sufficient, infinitely wise, powerful, just, &c. For though these properties agree not to the human nature, yet they agree to his person, and they are manifested to be in him without question. 2. The exaltation of the human nature of Christ-man, it is to an unconceivable height of glory, such as the human nature united to the divine nature is capable of, by very many degrees beyond any thing that the elect, whether angels or men are capable of; the personal union making him capable of far more glory, and his excellent offices calling for it. 3. This exaltation consists in his absolute dominion and kingly power, which is more observably, directly, and plainly manifested in the days of the gospel-administration than it was under the law; so that now he is clearly known in respect of his kingly-office to be God in our nature, cloathed with our flesh, and to be Immanuel, God with us; and that this Immanuel hath *all power in heaven and earth committed to him; he hath the keys of hell and of death*, and *is King of kings, and Lord of lords, is exalted far above principalities and powers, and is given to be head over all things to the church.* In which respect that is most properly to be understood when it is said, that *he is set on the right hand of God;* so that now Jesus Christ, God and man in one person is in the highest glory, and in absolute dominion, nearest unto God, far above that which angels or saints are capable of. As kings use to set their greatest courtiers, and ministers, whom they would honour most, on their right hand, and as Solomon set his mother on his right hand; so is our Lord set on the

right hand of God in higheſt glory. It is true, that, as God, he hath an abſolutely ſovereign and independent kingdom; yet, as Mediator, God-man, he hath a diſpenſatory kingdom next unto the Father in glory. 4. This exaltation conſiſts in Chriſt's being furniſhed with qualifications ſuitable to that glorious condition wherewith he is inveſted. And though theſe qualifications of the man-Chriſt be not ſimply infinite, yet they are far above what we can conceive; and the qualifications of the perſon God-man are infinite, in which reſpect he is omnipotent, all-ſeeing, and infinitely wiſe to provide every thing that may be for the good of his church and people, and to prevent what may tend to their hurt, he being omnipreſent, *&c.*

The *uſes* are *three*, 1. This ſhould waken and rouze our ſpirits to an high, holy, and reverent eſteem of Chriſt; he is God above all gods, King above all kings; he hath got *a name above every name, that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow*, not ſuperſtitiouſly when he is named, but holily and reverently to think of him, and to worſhip and ſerve him. We conceive among many faults and evils in believers, this is a root-evil, even low thoughts of the glorious Chriſt; ſo that becauſe he hath become low to lift us up, we are ready to think the leſs of him. But O! that we could behold the glorious condition he is exalted unto, and could look upon him as e'er long we ſhall, 'coming in the clouds with power and great 'glory, in the glory of his Father, and all the holy 'angels with him;' it would furniſh us with reverent thoughts of him, tho' not to hurt faith and confidence, yet to breed holy awe and reverence in us towards him.

The *2d uſe* ſerves to ſhew what a formidable party they have to contend with, who ſlight our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, what loſs they ſuſtain who loſe him, and what a great aggravation their ſin hath who ſin againſt him. Ye that ſlight, refuſe, and oppoſe him, do ye know

know whom ye refuse, and whose dominion ye spurn against, and how hard it will be for you to kick against the pricks? Do ye know your loss who lose him, and how it will aggravate your guilt who despise him? The more glorious Christ is, the greater will the sin of the unbeliever be; therefore beware what ye are doing; ye have a mighty great and strong party to deal with; and when the great day of his wrath comes, and when he shall appear in his glory, how will you be able to abide the least touch of it? It will aggravate your sin and heighten your misery, that he whom the Father exalted was undervalued by you; that ye scorned to take a direction from him, or to submit to a censure drawn forth in his name, and said, at least by your practice, 'Let us break his bands 'asunder, and cast away his cords from us.' But he 'hath set his King on his holy hill of Zion,' for all that, and 'he that sits in heaven will laugh, the Lord 'will have you in derision.' Think on it seriously, and know that he is no mean person whom ye slight and despise; and tho' this may now seem less than other sins, yet it will one day lie heavy on your conscience, above many, yea, above all other sins.

The 3*d use* serves to be a motive and encouragement to them that hear this gospel to receive Christ, and for the consolation of believers, who have received him. 1. It serves to encourage you all to receive him. He is no mean person that courts you, but *King of kings, and Lord of lords;* and if ye think it a happiness to be for ever with him, then let it move you to close with him; if ye do so, ye shall be made glorious as he is glorious, a due proportion betwixt the head and the members being kept, ye shall *sit on the same throne with him*, and *behold his glory;* as he prayeth, John xvii. *I will that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me, to behold my glory;* this is certainly a great privilege; if Christ be glorious, he calleth you to share with him in the same glory. 2. It

It ſerves for the conſolation of believers, who have received him. Ye have an excellent Mediator, a moſt glorious Head and Huſband, and a moſt excellent dowry, and ye ſhall know it to your ſuperabundant ſatisfaction and joy in that day, when, as it is, Pſal. xlv. Ye ſhall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work, *and ſhall* enter into the King's palace, *and ſhare of his glory*, *and* ſee him face to face, *and* ſit with him on his throne, even as he hath overcome, and is ſet down with his Father on his throne. Labour to be ſtedfaſt in the faith and hope of this good, glorious, and deſirable day that is coming, when we ſhall not only ſee, but partake of, and be fully and for ever poſſeſſed of that which eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of.

3. From the words, as we expounded them, *obſerve*, That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt who ſuffered, and was in his ſufferings brought very low, is God. We find ordinarily in ſcripture, eſpecially through the New Teſtament, theſe three going together, 1. Chriſt's humiliation. 2. His exaltation following on that. And 3. His Godhead. His humiliation is not readily ſpoken of without his exaltation, nor his exaltation without his Godhead; becauſe it is impoſſible to ſeparate Chriſt's exaltation from his Godhead; his exaltation being the evidence of his Godhead; and the prophet's ſcope here being to ſet forth Chriſt's exaltation; and Philip preaching of it to the eunuch from this text, it is doubtleſs the contemplation of Chriſt's Godhead that occaſioneth this admiring exclamation, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* Which we apply, not ſo much to the ineffableneſs of his generation, as to its being an evidence that he is God. There are three or four ways whereby the ſcripture confirms this. Let me deſire you, by the way, not to look on this as a little momentous, or but a common doctrine. And ſince there are many ſo ignorant, that

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we should be ashamed to tell, what we hear from some of you concerning the Godhead of Jesus Christ, ye should take better heed to it, being a main pillar of Christian religion, without which our preaching and your faith are vain; for he is not believed on at all, if ye rest not on him as God. But to prosecute what we proposed, to wit, those several ways whereby the scripture confirms this truth; and to this purpose consider, *1st*, The express titles and names that are given to him in scripture, and some scripture-sayings of him which hold it forth; of which we shall give three instances, the first is that of, Isaiah ix. 6, 7. where, when Christ is prophesied of, it is said, 'Unto us a 'Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the go- 'vernment shall be upon his shoulders;' and what is he? 'He shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the 'mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of 'peace; of the increase of his government and peace 'there shall be no end.' Here we have these three, his humiliation, exaltation, and Godhead; his humiliation, 'Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is 'given. His exaltation, 'Of the increase of his go- 'vernment and peace there shall be no end, upon the 'throne of David and his kingdom, to order it, and 'to establish it with judgment and with justice;' and his Godhead is interjected and put in betwixt these two, in the names and titles given to him, 'Wonder- 'ful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting 'Father,' not as personally taken, but, as the word signifies, *The Father of eternity*, from whom all things have their being; and for the same reason, chap. vii. 14. he is called Immanuel, *God with us*. A *2d* place is that of, Phil. ii. 6. 'Who being in the form of 'God, thought it no robbery,' he did God no wrong, 'to be equal with God; he made himself of no re- 'putation, and took on him the form of a servant, '*&c.* Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, 'and given him a name above every name, *&c.*' A *3d* place,

3*d* place, is that of, Heb. i. 2, 3. 'God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke in times 'past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these 'last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath 'appointed Heir of all things, by whom also he made 'the world,' and what is he by whom he spake to us? 'who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things 'by the word of his power, when he had by himself 'purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of 'the Majesty on high.' There is much of Christ's excellency holden forth here; *he is* the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; the beam of the sun is not liker to the sun's light, the impression of the seal on the wax is not liker to the seal, than the Son is to the Father, (nay, the liveliest resemblances fall infinitely short of a full and exact resemblance) the Father and he being the same God, and he being compared with the Father, not simply as God essentially taken, but as the second person of the Trinity compared with him who is the first person. O deep and adorable mystery!

A 2*d* way to clear and confirm it, is to consider his works, oft-times joined with his name; the works of creation, providence, redemption, and guiding of his church. So we have it John i. 1. *In the begining was the word*, the substantial word of the Father, the Son of his love, called the *word*, either as expressing the Father's image, as a man's word expresseth his mind, or because as a prophet of the church he hath revealed the Father's will. It is said that this word was not only *with* God, but *was* God; and then follows in several verses together his works, the works of creation, *All things were made by him*, &c. the works of providence are attributed to him, John v. 17. *My Father worketh, and I work*, and the work of redemption, and his glorious going through with it, declare

him

him to be the Son of God; for none but God could redeem his church.

3*dly*, For clearing and confirming of this truth, we may take the expreſs confeſſion of the ſaints in ſcripture, whereon there is much weight laid, and I ſhall name but five or ſix of their confeſſions, which to this purpoſe are expreſly and fully recorded. The firſt is that of Matt. xvi. 16. *Whom do men ſay that I am?* Peter anſwered, *Thou art the Son of the living God;* and Chriſt ſays, *Bleſſed art thou, Simon Barjona, fleſh and blood hath not revealed that unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven;* to let us know, that it is not ſuch a little thing to believe Chriſt's Godhead as many take it to be; and then he calls himſelf *the rock on which his church is built.* Chriſt's Godhead is the foundation of Chriſtianity. A 2*d* is John i. 49. in Nathanael's words. Chriſt tells him, *Before Philip called thee, when thou waſt under the fig-tree, I ſaw thee;* and he having got this proof of Chriſt's omniſcience, preſently breaks out, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael*; and that is the firſt thing his faith evidenceth itſelf in. A 3*d* place is John vi. 67, 68, 69. where, when Chriſt is ſaying to the twelve, *Will ye alſo leave me? Simon anſwered, Lord, to whom ſhall we go, for thou haſt the words of eternal life, and we believe and are ſure, that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the living God.* There is much in theſe words, *We believe and are ſure* that it is ſo. A 4*th* place is, John xi. 27. and it is Martha's confeſſion. *Yea, Lord I believe that thou art Chriſt, the Son of God, which ſhould come into the world.* The 5*th* place is that of John xx. 28. when Chriſt bids Thomas reach hither his hand and put it into his ſide, his glory ſhines ſo full in his face, that he cries out, *My Lord, and my God*, and his faith is ſummed up and comprehended in that. The laſt place that we ſhall name is that of Acts viii. 37. and it is the

eunuch's confeſſion, *I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*, which is the ſum of his faith.

The 4*th* and laſt way of confirmation of this great truth, is drawn from the worſhip which is due unto him, and hath been given unto him. He is the object of faith, John xiv. 11. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* He is the object of prayer, Acts vii. 59. *They ſtoned Stephen calling upon God, ſaying, Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit:* And frequently elſewhere in ſcripture he is prayed unto; tho' theſe two are not too curiouſly to be ſeparated.

Uſe 1. The firſt uſe ſerves to ſtrengthen your faith in this, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt who ſuffered for ſinners, and is offered to them in the goſpel, is God equal with the Father, and ſo he is to be cloſed with, and reſted on as the brightneſs of the Father's glory. The reaſon why we would have you confirmed in the faith of this, is not ſmall; for it is a moſt neceſſary thing, and without the faith of it, all the work of our ſalvation will hang looſe; neither can we have any claim to eternal life; and therefore we deſire you particularly who are ignorant hearers, and who have the name of Chriſt often in your mouths, and yet know not what he is, to know, remember, and believe, that he that is the Son of Mary, is alſo the eternal Son of God, being God before he was incarnate, and before the world was made, and the maker of all that was made.

Uſe 2. The ſecond uſe ſerves to let you know, that tho' it be a moſt neceſſary thing to be confirmed in the faith of this truth, that Chriſt is God, yet it is a greater difficulty to believe and be perſuaded of it, than the moſt part take it to be; many ſad proofs whereof we have in peoples words, and more in their practice. *Fleſh and blood*, ſaith Chriſt, Matt. xvi. *hath not revealed this unto thee.* It is a wonder whence ſo many peoples faith comes, who never found any the leaſt difficulty in this; and it is a wonder that ſo few

few are thoroughly grounded in the faith of it; so that if they were called and put to it, they durst not give their oath that he is God; yea, if we would look on a little further, we should find, that the faith of this is but scarce amongst us, not to speak of the gross ignorance of many, who will say when asked, that he is not equal with the Father, or that he was made God, and other such-like expressions will they have, that are abominable to be once named amongst Christians; men, through their ignorance, falling into damnable heresies on the matter, and yet not knowing that they do so. As if our blessed Lord were made a God, and not the same God with the Father; for the proving of him to be God, proves him to be the same God, there being but one God.

Ye should consider for convincing you that it is thus with many of you, 1. The little fear that is in men and women of the majesty of Christ as God; they durst not walk with so little fear of him, if they believed indeed that he were God. What made the Jews with the scribes and Pharisees to spit upon him and despise him? but because they wanted the faith of his Godhead. And have not ye the same nature in you? Ye live in a place where the faith of Christ's Godhead is professed, and is not questioned; but your practice says to beholders, that ye believe it not, because ye fear him not. 2. That your souls do so little welcome the offer of the gospel; that tells that ye believe him not to be God. 3. That ye do not place your happiness in believing on him, and in the way of holiness; ye say in effect, of what use is Christ? ye care not for him. Hence it is that so many live contentedly without him, and are not solicitous about the enjoying of him. 4. Even in believers there is much unbelief of this truth, which is sadly evidenced by this, that they do not so bless themselves in him, and that they do not so reckon themselves to have got a good portion, and to be made up in him, as David

doth, Pſal. xvi. where he ſaith, and holily glorieth, *The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places*, &c. and by the frequent diſcouragement that is incident to believers, as if Chriſt had not the guiding of them, and of what concerns them, or could not guide all things well enough for their good. If he were believed to be God, it would quaſh temptations, baniſh diſcouragement, comfort under croſſes, ſweeten every condition, induce to holineſs, reſtrain from ſin. And in a word, it cannot be told what is contained in this one truth when ſolidly believed. For what can poſſibly be wanting to the believer in him that is God? He hath the fulneſs of the Godhead to ſupply whatever they want, and ſuſtains the relation of a huſband to the believer to make it good to them. And he is furniſhed with ſuitable qualifications to make the application thereof. What then could be wanting if this were thoroughly believed, that he is God? Let me ſay it to you, the faith of this would provoke to more holineſs, and to ſtudy more the power than the profeſſion of religion, and would help us to live a more comfortable life in every condition.

SER-

SERMON XXXI.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 8.

Verſe 8. *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment, and who ſhall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.*

THESE words are a proof of that which we diſcourſed in the lecture concerning Chriſt's wonderful love to his people, than which no man hath greater, that a man ſhould lay down his life for his friend; but he hath commended his love to us, in that while we were yet enemies he died for us.

This is the great commendation of Chriſt's love, and what will he refuſe to his people, who in his love hath done ſo much for them?

In the former part of this verſe, we ſhewed that there was a hint given of Chriſt's exaltation, of the exaltation and glory of the Mediator following after his loweſt ſufferings. An ineffable and inexpreſſible glory, which the prophet rather paſſeth with a ſort of ſilence that inſiſteth on the declaration of it, *Who ſhall declare his generation?*

We come now to the laſt part of the words, 'For 'he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the 'tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.' They are added as a reaſon of the former, and the one part of them is a reaſon of the other. He ſaid before, *Who ſhall declare his generation?* Who can ſufficiently declare and unfold, how glorioufly the Mediator is exalted:

exalted: And he gives this for the reason of it, *For he was cut off out of the land of the living;* the sum of which is, that he humbled himself, therefore God hath highly exalted him, as the apostle reasons, Phil. ii. 9. So that this is not added as being posterior to his exaltation but as a reason shewing the connection of his exaltation with his humiliation. And lest it should be a stumbling to any, that this glorious person suffered death, he gives the reason of that also, which strengthens the reason of his exaltation, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken;* or, as the word is, *The stroke was on him*, he suffered not for any wrong in himself, but for the sins of his own elect people. The first particularly looks to Christ's death, which was a prophecy in Isaiah's time, but is now an historical narration to us, we having the gospel as a commentary on it. To be *cut off out of the land of the living*, is to have an end put to the natural life, which is ordinarily done by death. But *cutting off* here signifies to be taken away, not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary way, to be removed by a violent death, by the stroke of justice.

We may make these two *observations* for the confirmation of two articles of our faith. For looking on it, 1. As a prophecy, we may *observe*, That our Lord Jesus behoved to suffer and die; it was prophesied of him, *That he shall be cut off out of the land of the living.* And Dan. ix. 26. it is plainly and clearly asserted, that *the Messiah should be cut off*, which being compared with the history of the gospel, we have it as a truth fulfilled; for our Lord Jesus was cut off, and as he himself says, Luke xxiv. *It behoved him to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory;* and supposing the elect to be sinners, and the curse to be added to the covenant of works, *The day thou eatest thou shalt surely die;* supposing also the Mediator to have engaged, and undertaken to satisfy justice, and undergo that curse for the elect, there was necessity that

that he ſhould die; as it is, Gal. iii. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us*, which curſe was evident in his death; for it is written, *Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

2. *Obſerve*, That our Lord Jeſus behoved to die a violent death, and not an ordinary natural one; which this expreſſion, and that other in Dan. ix. clearly hold forth; and conſidering that his ſinleſs nature was not liable to death, and that he had not thoſe principles of dying in him, diſpoſing him to die, that we ſinful miſerable mortals have in us; and conſidering withal that the Lord Jehovah was (to ſpeak ſo) purſuing him as ſinners ſurety at the bar of juſtice, it was meet, yea neceſſary, that our bleſſed Lord ſhould not die an ordinary death as men die ordinarily, through weakneſs or ſickneſs on their beds, but a violent death.

Uſe. It ſerves to be a confirmation of this truth, that the Meſſiah behoved thus to die; therefore we ſay in the *belief*, *He ſuffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;* which ſhews, 1*ſt*, The reality of his ſatisfaction, and the compleat payment that he made to juſtice, when he lays down that price which the ſinner ought to have laid down. 2*dly*, It ſhews the reality of our Lord's ſufferings, and that they were not imaginary, but that as he was a real and true man, ſo his ſufferings were moſt real; his ſoul was ſeparated from his body, tho' the union betwixt both his body and his ſoul and the Godhead continued ſtill. 3*dly*, It holds forth a proof and confirmation of our faith in this, that our Lord Jeſus is the Meſſiah that was propheſied of, and promiſed, in whom all the ſufferings in his ſoul and body that were ſpoken of, to go before his death, were accompliſhed, and in whom this was alſo accompliſhed, that, *he was cut off out of the land of the living*. So that if we look rightly on the ſcriptures, our Lord's ſufferings will be ſo far from being matter of ſtumbling, that they

they will rather be a clear, convincing, and an evident proof, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah, and that in him, all that was spoken concerning the Messiah is fulfilled and come to pass.

It is matter of great consolation to believers, that our Lord Jesus, who is now exalted, died, and so death is spoiled, and there needs not be any great fear for them to engage with it. This *land of the living* is not their rest, within a little they must be gone hence; our Lord was cut off from it, and that by a shameful death, on the behalf and for the sake of others, and not for himself; and therefore his death cannot but be made good for them for whom he underwent it, and their petty sufferings need not much disturb them. These plainest truths that are most ordinary have in them much spiritual sap, juice, and life, to strengthen faith, and to furnish consolation to believers: And if they were rightly understood, and fed upon by faith, O how lively might they be? And were there no more but these two words in the text, O how much consolation do they yield in life and in death? Our Lord is gone before believers, therefore they may be greatly encouraged to follow him.

The last part, or the last thing in the words, seems to have some more obscurity in it, and therefore we shall insist the more in opening of the same.

For the transgression of my people was he stricken. These words do not look to the reason why Pilate and the priests condemned him; for they had no thought of the sins of God's people; though Caiaphas stumbled, as to himself, by guess, on a prophecy of his dying for them. But they give a reason why he was *cut off out of the land of the living*; and look to the court and tribunal of God's justice, before which he was standing, and by which he was to be sentenced to death, for the transgressions of God's people, and also absolved; he was thus stricken in respect of God's purpose and design.

For

For clearing of these words, it may be enquired, 1*st*, What is meant here by *my people?* 2*dly*, What is it to be *stricken* or *smitten* for them?

For the 1*st*, *My people*, it is a discriminating or differencing of some from others: And therefore, by *my people* here is not meant, 1*st*, All the world, or all that ever lived and had a being, we find not any where in scripture that these are called *my people*, or God's *people;* but whenever *my people* is spoken of, it is used to set land-marks betwixt his people, and other people that are not his, as John x. 26, 27. 'Ye believe not 'because ye are not of my sheep, my sheep hear my 'voice, and I know them,' which supposeth that some are his, and others not so his; and so *my people* cannot be all the world. Neither 2*dly*, can it be meant of the whole visible church, who in respect of the external administration of the covenant, are sometimes called his people, as all Israel are. There is a narrower boundary drawn, John x. 26. where they that were only externally in covenant with him, of them he says, *Ye are not my sheep*, to shew, that his reckoning there must not go upon external profession; and verse 16. some that were not for the time professing themselves to be his people, are reckoned; *Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in.* Nor 3*dly*, can it be limited to them that were actually converted and believers; for he says, as I just now hinted, that 'he hath other sheep that are not yet 'brought in,' and he is said, 'to gather together in-'to one the children of God that were scattered 'abroad,' John xi. 52. So then, by *my people* must be understood those who in God's eternal purpose are separated by the decree of election to be his own, even those whom he hath chosen to glorify himself in and by them through his grace, and to glorify them with himself; even those spoken off, John xvii. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* They are the people who were transacted for in the covenant of redemp-

tion, and that were given by the Father to the Son, to be redeemed by him; it was for their sins, even for the sins of the elect, that our Lord Jesus was stricken.

As for the 2*d*, What it is to be *stricken for their transgression*; the meaning is, the meritorious cause of their stroke was on Christ, which intimates to us, that his sufferings and death were procured by the sins of the elect of God; his stroke, or the stroke that was upon him, as the word is, was the amends that justice got for their sins. In a word, the stroke that the elects sins procured and merited, 'Took him out of,' or away from, 'the land of the living, brought him 'to prison and to judgment, and made his soul an 'offering for sin:' Neither can this be otherways understood, for it is not said that for their good, or for their behoof only, or to be an example and pattern of patience only to them, he was stricken, as some grossly erroneous and profane men expound the words, but *for their transgression was he stricken*, that is, it was their guilt, which he having undertaken and engaged to satisfy for, made him liable to this stroke.

In this part of the words thus opened, we have two notable points concerning the covenant of redemption. 1. The party for whom it is contrived and intended, and that is the elect, or God's people. It is not all the world, nor all the visible church-members that God transacted for in the covenant with the Mediator, but *my people*, the elect of God; they were so considered in the transaction and in the execution. 2. The great price that was sought or required, that was offered, and that was agreed upon for the redemption of the elect, to wit, the death of the Mediator, even his dying the cursed death of the cross; this is the sum, for the transgressions of God's people, the stroke was upon him; God's design being to glorify his grace in the salvation of so many, sin having intervened to bring them under the curse; there is upon the one part

part the Lord's giving of them to the Mediator to be redeemed by him, and upon the other part the Mediator's accepting of them on the terms propoſed, he is content to ſatisfy for them, to take the ſtroke on himſelf deſerved by them, that they may go free; each of theſe may be conſidered ſeveral ways for furniſhing of ſweet doctrines.

1. From the firſt of theſe *obſerve*, that theſe are ſome differenced from others in reſpect of God's purpoſe, ſome choſen of God for his people out of the reſt of the world. From hence it is, that ſome are God's people ere they be born, and ere Chriſt die for them, John xvii. 16. *Thine they were, and thou gaveſt them me:* They are ſuppoſed to be God's people in ſome peculiar reſpect, ere they be given to Chriſt to be redeemed by him. In a word, the Lord hath an elect people, or a people choſen to ſalvation in his eternal purpoſe and decree, an elect people, or a people choſen out of the world, which in this reſpect others are not his people, or are not elected. There are four qualifications or properties in this doctrine, which will ſerve to clear it: 1. When we ſay there is ſuch a decree of election, we ſay that it is a *diſcriminating* or *differencing decree*, wherein or whereby there is a taking of ſome, and not all; a taking of one, and a leaving another; taking of Iſaac, and a leaving of Iſhmael; a taking of Jacob, and a leaving of Eſau; as it is Rom. ix. And this diſcrimination or differencing, hath theſe four ſteps, 1. There is a difference in God's purpoſe, in reſpect of the end, while all men are alike before him, ſome are deſigned to eternal life, and others are not; therefore, Matt. xxv. 34. It is ſaid, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* And in this reſpect the *book of life* is ſaid to be *opened*, Rev. xx. 12. 2. This difference is in reſpect of God's offering and giving of them to the Mediator in the covenant of redemption, wherein

some, and not all, are given to Christ, John xvii. 2. *That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him out of the world:* Where it is clear, that so many are given to him in reference to whom he is to exercise his offices. 3. There is a difference made in respect of Christ's undertaking and executing his offices for them, he accepts of them, John xvii. 9. *For their sakes I sanctify myself*, I have separated myself to the office of Mediator, and do offer myself for them, *that they also may be sanctified*; and *I pray for them, I pray not for the world*: It is of them that he maketh that sweet account, John vi. 39. *This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day:* And of whom he saith, John x. 28, 29. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand:* He answers, and is accountable for them, and for them only, but for none other as being redeemed by him, and to be made partakers of his glory. 4. This difference is in respect of the promises made upon God's part to the Mediator in favour of the elect, and of the benefits that flow to them from the covenant: He hath not promised to justify all, nor to make all believe, but some only. He, as it were, saith to the Mediator, these I give thee to be redeemed by thee, and on the laying down of thy life, and satisfying for them, I promise to make them believe, and that through faith in thee, they shall be justified, therefore saith Christ, John vi. 44. *Murmur not among yourselves; no man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him:* And who are they that shall believe on him? See verse 37. 'All that the Father hath given 'me shall come unto me, and him that cometh I will 'in no wise cast him out,' but will make him dearly welcome: And verse 45, 'Every one that hath heard 'and learned of the Father cometh unto me;' and John xvii. 2. 'That he should give eternal life to as 'many

'many as thou haſt given him.' Thus ye ſee what is meant when we call this a diſtinguiſhing decree. 2. We ſay that it is a *definite decree*, both in reſpect of them that are numbred, and that is, ſo many, and no more; and alſo in reſpect of ſuch a man and ſuch a woman in particular, in ſuch a place, and not all perſons; for they are all particularly deſigned, and are therefore ſaid to be *written in the Lamb's book of life.* It is not all who are foreſeen to believe who are elected, as if election did follow believing, as the cauſe of the decree; but it is ſuch a number whom the Lord engageth to the Mediator to draw, to teach and make them believers. 3. We ſay it is a *decree that is free*, as to all merit in them whom it reacheth; and it is free in theſe three reſpects, 1. In reſpect of any thing in the perſon or perſons elected, who are ſuppoſed to be lying as the reſt of the world; therefore it is ſaid of Jacob and Eſau, Rom. ix. 11. *The children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand*, &c. That is, God reſpected not the doing good or evil in his electing of the one, and paſſing by the other. 2. In reſpect of Chriſt's ſatisfaction and redemption, which preſuppoſeth this decree to be, and is the means by which it is accompliſhed, ſo that we are redeemed becauſe we are elected. The elect were God's people when Chriſt did undertake and engage for them; and in this reſpect election is a fountain-grace, and Chriſt's death is not the cauſe of election, though it be the cauſe of all the benefits that follow upon it. 3. It is free in reſpect of God's abſolute ſovereignty, who acts herein according to the purpoſe of his own will, having no reaſon without himſelf, as it is clear, Mat. xi. 'Even ſo Father, becauſe it ſeemed good in thy ſight;' And Eph. i. 11. 'Being predeſtinate according to the 'purpoſe of him, who worketh all things according 'to the counſel of his own will.' As the potter hath power over the clay, and makes of the ſame lump one veſſel

veſſel to honour, and another to diſhonour as he pleaſeth; ſo the Lord acts moſt ſovereignly in the decree of election. 4. We ſay that this decree is abſolute and peremptory; which is not ſo to be underſtood as if it admitted of no means in the execution of it: But this is the meaning, that the performing and bringing about thereof depends on nothing without God, neither can it be poſſibly fruſtrated. Theſe ſheep can never be plucked out of his hand, neither can they periſh, but muſt needs all and every one of them actually enjoy that which it decreed for them by his decree, elſe they could not be called God's people, if they might not be his. Thus you ſee what is the meaning of theſe words *my people*, that is, his elect people in or by the decree of election.

I ſhall briefly give you ſome few grounds from ſcripture to clear and confirm this truth: The 1. whereof is taken from the names that the people of God have, from the expreſſions that are uſed in making mention of them in ſcripture, which will infer all that hath been ſaid. As namely they are called *my ſheep*, John x. his ſheep that he knows, by name, which cannot be otherways; they are called *the election of grace*, Rom. xi. 5. 'At this preſent time there is a remnant, 'according to the election of grace;' and verſe 7. 'The election hath obtained, and the reſt were blind-'ed:' It is impoſſible but the elect muſt obtain, there being an inſeparable connection betwixt the decree and the end thereof; they are ſaid to be *written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world*, before there was any mention of themſelves, or conſideration of ought in themſelves, they are ſaid to be loved and beloved, and ordained to eternal life, Acts xiii. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, where believing is made a fruit and effect of this decree of election, it is ſo far from being a cauſe thereof; they are called *bleſſed of the Father*, Matt. xxv. and thoſe whom he bleſſeth cannot but be bleſ-

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fed; they are called fuch as *are given to Chrift*, holding forth a peculiar difference of them from others; they are called the people, *whom he foreknew and predeftinated*, Rom. viii. 29. 'Whom he did foreknow, 'them he did predeftinate,' &c. and Rom. xi. 2. 'God hath not caft away his people whom he fore-'knew:' Every one was not fo foreknown; for Chrift will fay to many at the great day, *depart from me; I never knew you.* Titles and names of this kind are frequent in the fcripture, whereby God diftinguifheth fome from others, which hath its rife from God's purpofe and decree of election. A 2*d* ground is taken from the oppofition which the fcripture maketh betwixt the elect and others who are not elected, which fhews clearly that election cannot be underftood of all, as if there were a general and conditional election: Hence it is faid, *Jacob have I loved, and Efau have I hated*; the electing of the one is oppofed to the rejecting of the other: So John x. the Lord fays of fome, *That they are his fheep*, and of others, *They are not my fheep:* And Rom. ix. the apoftle fpeaks of fome 'veffels of mercy which are before prepared for glory,' and of fome 'veffels of wrath fitted for deftruction:' And 2 Tim. ii. 21. fome are faid to be *veffels of honour*, fome of *difhonour*; fome are *ordained to eternal life*, Acts xiii. and 'fome are ordained of old to that 'deftruction, as Jude fpeaketh; fome are 'written 'in the Lamb's book of life,' and fome not, Rev. xx. and wherefore is all this fpoken? but to let us know that God hath freely and fovereignly in his decree put a difference betwixt fome and others, which as it began, if we may fo fpeak, in God's eternal purpofe, fo it will continue in the event; which is a 3*d* ground of confirmation; and it will be clear, if we compare God's purpofe and decree with the event and effect; for as a thing is in the event and effect, fo God intended and purpofed in his decree it fhould be; thus the Lord's final fentence at the day of judgment,

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is but the result of his eternal purpose: The book of life containing the names of all the elect was written, before the elect existed; and as it is said, Acts xv. 'Known unto God are all his works from the begin-'ning,' so in a special manner, and in a peculiar way this great work of redemption, and they that were to be redeemed were particularly known and written down in the book of God's decree of election. Hence it is said, Rom. xi. 7. 'Israel hath not obtain-'ed that which he seeketh for, but the election hath 'obtained;' and John vi. 37. 'All that the Father 'hath given me, shall come unto me:' And John x. 28. 'I give my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish.' There is Rom. viii. 30. a blessed harmony of things from God's purpose and decree of election, even to eternal glory, which is the result of election: And it being very clear that some are admitted and owned by Christ in the great day, and others not; this makes it clear, that there was a difference in the decree betwixt these so admitted and owned before the world was, and others not owned nor admitted; especially considering that this difference at the great day of judgment is drawn from the decree of election, Matt. xxv. 'Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit, 'the kingdom prepared for you before the founda-'tion of the world was laid:' As if the Lord had said, there was a purpose and design of bringing you to heaven before the world was. A *4th* ground is taken from the nature of God's covenant of redemption, which holds forth clearly the truth of this doctrine concerning election in all the steps of it. As 1. In God's making the offer and gift of some to the Mediator; it is only some that he gives, and not all. 2. In Christ's acceptation of the offer and gift: He prays for some, he sanctifies himself for some, and for some he satisfies, and not for all. 3. There is not a promise in all the covenant of redemption, whether it be of grace or of glory, but it is intended for the elect only,

only, and not for all. 'I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh,' John x. 'Thy people 'ſhall be willing in the day of thy power,' Pſal. cx. 3.' Chriſt's undertaking is for them only, John x. 'Other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold, them 'alſo I muſt bring in:' There is a neceſſity for the bringing of them in and no other, becauſe he undertook for them and for no other. We the rather take notice of, and inſiſt ſo much on this, becauſe it will much ſerve to clear the following doctrine concerning the redemption of the elect; for if there be a diſtinguiſhing of them from others by the decree of election, then there muſt be a diſtinguiſhing of them from others in Chriſt's laying down of his life for them and not for any others: Election is the key of all: There is ſuch a people, and they are the object of the covenant of redemption, whoſe good is ſought after and agreed upon therein, and not any others.

Uſe 1. It ſerves for the confirmation of an important truth, and we would not have you to think little of any part of truth. We ſhall not here follow the ſubtile cavillings of adverſaries againſt this truth, only we would have you confirmed in the faith of it: For 1. If ye be not clear and eſtabliſhed in the faith of this truth, ye will be in great hazard, not only to have your evidences clouded, but to obſtruct and ſtop the whole current and tract of grace, ſo that grace ſhall be a common thing, heaven and happineſs ſhall go by gueſs, redemption ſhall be univerſal, *&c.* But let this truth be once eſtabliſhed, that God hath a peculiar people for whom the Mediator tranſacted, and theſe errors will vaniſh and fall to the ground. For it is the love of election from which all the reſt of the benefits that come to the elect flow; and this love is peculiar, therefore there cannot be a common application of it. It is the peculiarneſs of grace that commends it to the ſouls of believers, and makes it wonderful to them: That God ſhould have taken notice

of them, that were by nature separate from God as well as others; that their case being common, his love should be peculiar, is indeed just and great matter of wonder; hence comes in that song, Rev. v. 9. 'Thou 'hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every 'kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation:' Not all of every nation, people, tongue and kindred are redeemed, but some out of every one of these. Let this then be received as a solid truth, that the Lord in his eternal purpose hath made a difference and separation of some from others, which is the great ground of the title that God hath to these some.

2*dly*, Clearness in this truth serves to keep the hearts of God's people in awe of him, to lift him up very high in their esteem as sovereign over the creature: And if any should quarrel with God and say, Why did God so? That of the apostle comes well in for an answer, *Who art thou, O man, that replyest against God?* It is his sovereign pleasure who is supreme potter, and hath *power over the clay to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour.* When the soul doth thus conceive of God as having all mankind before him as a lump of clay, and choosing out of it, and writing up one man and not another, it must needs in a transport of admiration say, O! what a great and sovereign God must he be, who did determine and write down the eternal condition of men before ever the world was!

3*dly*, This *first* preacheth to the people of God wonderful grace, when they, having got their calling and election made sure, come in and read their names which were in God's decree of election before they had a being. And 2. It is to them matter of exceeding great consolation. *First*, I say, it preacheth wonderful grace that freely chose them; and that when thousands of great men, and noblemen were passed by, such a poor creature that was half a fool in comparison with them, should be chosen; according to that,

that, 1 Cor. i. 'Not many wise after the flesh, not 'many mighty, not many noble hath God called, 'but he hath chosen the foolish things of the world, 'weak and base, and things that are not, to make them kings and priests unto God and his Father. *Secondly*, It is matter of exceeding great consolation to them, that it is *free* and *sure*. *Free*, even so free that it stops the mouths of boasters; for what I pray, have the elect more to speak of as a ground for boasting, than a Pagan in America, or one in hell? 'Who 'made thee to differ, or what hast thou, O man, that 'thou hast not received?' It is election that made the difference. And it is *sure*, for their salvation is founded on God's purpose and decree, which is the solid rest of a believer; kindness began not on our side, but on God's, as Christ says, *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you*, John xv. 16.

4. It speaks forth this, that all of you had need to make your calling and election sure. This is the very hinge of the believers consolation, even to have the proof of it in your consciences, that ye are enrolled among the elect; and so labour to have the evidence of this decree, that ye may see and read your names in it. Hence many streams of consolation flow out: If it be so with you, then ye were given to Christ; Christ undertook to satisfy justice for you; ye shall have faith and more faith, ye shall have repentance and sanctification, and also heaven and glory at the end of your course. If it be said, this is much, how shall it be brought about? we answer, it is not impossible: And to make it out, hear but two words, that are both directions and marks, the practice whereof will give a solid proof of your enrollment in God's book, whence all these great and glorious things have their rise. 1. Where there is a yielding to Christ's call in the gospel, and a falling in with him, that evidenceth election; for it is certain that none shall, or can come to Christ and believe in him but the elect,

and whoever are elected must and shall come, sooner or later, John vi. 37. 'All that the Father giveth me 'shall come unto me;' and John x. 4. 'His sheep 'follow him, and know his voice:' They accept of and make welcome Christ's call in the gospel, and they that accept of it are elected. So that there is no need of any new revelation about the matter, neither needs there any torturing anxiety to know, how to come by thy name in the roll of the elect. Try it by this; if thou hast given obedience to the call of the gospel, if thou hast in the sense of thy need of a Saviour fled unto Jesus Christ, and on his own terms accepted of him; by this thy tenure or holding is sure: And by this thou hast an evidence that thou art an elect. For his sheep come unto him and hear his voice; and as many of you as truly believe on him, and have betaken yourselves to him for life and salvation, have the seal and witness in yourselves, that your names were in God's book before the world was. But if this be not, debate, dispute and question as ye will about it, whatever may be afterwards, ye have no evidence for the present of your election. 2. Where there is real holiness, or a real study and endeavour to be holy and more holy; it is an evidence of election, and of a person's being enrolled in the volume of the book of God's decree, because holiness is a fruit of election, as is clear, Eph. i. 4. 'According 'as he hath chosen us before the foundation of the 'world, that we should be holy;' never a person is really holy but such as God designed should be holy. To this purpose the apostle having, 2 Tim. ii. 21. spoken of election, 'The foundation of the Lord stands 'sure, having this seal; the Lord knows who are his, 'and let every one that names the name of Christ de-'part from iniquity; but in a great house are not on-'ly vessels of gold,' &c. he subjoins, 'If a man 'therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a ves-'sel unto honour, sanctified,' &c. not that election dependeth

dependeth on man's holineſs, but by his holineſs he ſhall be manifeſted to be, and accounted an elect veſſel, and may warrantably conclude himſelf to be ſuch; ſo that true holineſs brings people to be acquainted with the great ſecret of election, and gives them boldneſs to make the application of it. There is nothing that men readily deſire more to know than this, whether they be elected or not: Here is a ſure way to come by the knowledge of it, even to ſtudy to believe, and to be holy; and then we may be confident that our names were written in the Lamb's book of life; but if we deſpiſe faith in Chriſt and holineſs, whatever may be in God's purpoſe about us, we have for the time no ground to conclude that we are elected. May God himſelf fix us in theſe things that have ſuch mighty conſequents depending on them!

SERMON XXXII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verſe* 8.

Verſe 8. *He was taken from priſon, and from judgment, and who ſhall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken.*

THE prophet hath been long in deſcribing Chriſt's ſufferings, and hath ſhown what height they came to, even *to priſon and to judgment*, and to death itſelf, 'He was cut off out of the land of the living.' Now

Now he puts in a word to shew wherefore all this was, or what was the procuring cause that brought all this suffering and sorrow on Christ, which also was the end that he had before him in it, in these words, 'For the transgression of my people was he stricken.' We shewed that by *my people* here, was not meant all men and women in the world, nay, nor all men who are externally called in the visible church, but his elect only; those whom he hath chosen to be his people, and separated from others by an eternal decree of election; we shewed also that these words, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*, do not only contain a reason of Christ's extream sufferings, even of his being *brought to prison and to judgment* before men, but also and mainly of his being brought so before God, and of his being *cut off*: For the sins of God's people are not laid to his charge before men, but before God they are; and so it does imply an influence that the sins of the elect had upon Christ's sufferings, and a respect that his sufferings had to their sins; the elects sins procured these sufferings to him, and his sufferings were undegone by him for the satisfying of justice for their sins, and for the removing of them.

I shall not insist further in the exposition of the words, having opened them the last day, but shall hint at a few *doctrines* from them; and because they are general and more doctrinal, I shall be the shorter in speaking to them. Though it may be ye do not regard them much, yet they are not a little for your edification; and if ye were suitably sensible of sin, and of your hazard, there is no doctrine concerning the covenant of redemption, but it would be useful and refreshing to you.

There are several things implied here concerning the efficacy of Christ's death, and concerning the extent of it, as its laid down as a price for the sins of the elect, which I shall first only speak a little to, and then come

come to those doctrines that are more directly held forth in the words.

1. Then, it is implied, that there is a people of God separated from others, and chosen by him, on whom he intended and purposed before the world was, to glorify his grace. The very designation that they have here clears this: It is *my people*, not only of the Jews, nor my people of the Gentiles, but my people both of Jews and Gentiles; as Christ says, John x. *Other sheep have I which are not of this fold, them I must bring in.*

2. It is implied that this decree of election is antecedent to, and goes before the covenant of redemption in order of nature, it flows not from Christ's death as the effect of it, but is prior to it; for if Christ's death be the means or price (as indeed it is) whereby the sins of God's elect people are satisfied for, then the decree of election must precede it; only we should beware how we ascribe to God any priority or posteriority in his decrees in order of time, for he is infinite in wisdom and foresight, and able to look on all things with one view, and to decree things infinite in number at once, which we cannot conceive of, nor comprehend. But this we say, that considering the order of things, the decree of election is not a fruit or effect of Christ's death, but prior to it; and Christ's death follows as a means to make it effectual: He is appointed to save the elect from their sins, and from that which their sins deserved; *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*: They were God's people by election before Christ's engagement to suffer and satisfy for them, much more before his actual suffering; and so their election cannot be a fruit and effect of his suffering.

Use. It serves to vindicate this truth from an error and mistake of the Arminians, who, as they overthrow the design of grace in the salvation of sinners, in other steps thereof, so do they in this, in making Christ's

Christ's death to precede election, and election to follow it. But, as we hinted before, the decree of election is sovereign, being an act of grace absolutely free, the Lord in it having designed some for manifesting the glory of his grace upon them as the end, he hath taken in Christ's death and other means for the promoting of it.

3. It is implied here, that even the elect or God's people are considered as sinful in the covenant of redemption: 'For the transgression of my people was he stricken;' they were considered as sinful as well as others, when they were engaged for. We need not dispute, whether they were considered as sinful in the decree of election, it not being necessary in this place, nor profitable for you, but sure in Christ's undertaking for them they are considered as sinful; for God sent not Christ, neither came he into the world to purchase life and salvation for righteous men, but he was sent and came to lay down his life *as a ransom for many*, to wit, sinners; and therefore it is given as the reason of his name, Matt. i. 21. 'Thou shalt call his 'name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their 'sins.'

Use 1. It serves to humble the elect greatly, who when ever they come to receive grace, they have it most freely, for they were no better by nature than others whom God past by, as is clear, Eph. ii. 1. 'We were dead in trespasses and sins, and were by na-'ture children of wrath, even as others:' Peter and Paul were by nature children of wrath as well as Judas. And David was a child of wrath by nature, as well as Saul; when this transaction concerning the work of redemption was agreed upon and concluded betwixt these most responsal parties.

2. It serves also much for the encouragemet of a believer, who is sensible of sin, and afraid, of wrath, and in that posture betakes himself to Christ for refuge; though his belief should make him say with

with Peter, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord*, yet this conſideration may hearten him to draw near, that Chriſt was ſtricken for ſinners, for the tranſgreſſions of his elect people; yea, if there had not been ſin, and if the covenant of works had ſtood, there needed not to have been a Saviour, and therefore ſinners have here a ſolid ground to lay hold upon for life and ſalvation.

And therefore as a *3d uſe* of it; it is an unſafe aſſertion, beſide the curioſity of it, that Antinomians maintain, which is, that though man had never fallen, yet Chriſt would have become man; for we ſee here that Chriſt's becoming man, and his being ſtricken, flowed from his being Surety for elect ſinners; and his being Surety flowed from the covenant of redemption concerning elect ſinners. To be wiſe without, or beſide and above what is written in the ſcripture, it is vanity, pride and folly.

4. It is implied here, that ſin wherever it is deſerves ſtrokes, even the ſins of the elect: Yea, we may add this to it, that not only do the ſins of the elect deſerve ſtrokes in themſelves, being branches of God's law; but that there is an actual curſe ſtanding againſt them till it be removed: And God's threatning, *The day thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die*, infers a neceſſity of ſtrokes. This we ſay is clearly implied here, becauſe the Mediator entering himſelf Surety for the elects debt behoved to be ſmitten; and when he was ſo ſmitten, ſure ſin muſt deſerve much: We ſpeak not of an abſolute neceſſity; but God having revealed to man his duty, and added a threatning, that in the day he ſhould eat he ſhould die, there is a neceſſity in reſpect of God's truth, faithfulneſs, and unchangeableneſs, who had ſpoken the word, that ſtrokes ſhould follow ſin, for ſin cannot be removed till the threatning be ſatisfied.

Uſe. This may point out to us that ſin is no little nor light thing, neither is the obtaining of pardon an

eaſy buſineſs, whatever men generally think of them. There are many ſad ſtrokes that follow ſin, which will hotly purſue ſinners who are not in Chriſt. O! do not then make light of ſin, which is the fountain of ſo much miſery and woe to the ſinner. If ye knew how exceeding bitter wrath and the curſe is that follows ſin, ye would as ſoon go into a flame of fire as ye would meddle with it: If ye believed that word to be true which is in, Exod. xxxiv. *He will by no means clear the guilty:* And if ye believed God's faithfulneſs that is engaged to make good his threatnings, quarrels with ſin would be more ſtrong and vehement.

5. It is implied here, that though the elects ſins deſerve wrath, and that there muſt be a ſatisfaction ere they can be removed, that yet the elect cannot ſatisfy for themſelves; *For the tranſgreſſions of my people was he ſtricken;* Chriſt behoved to be ſmitten ere their ſin could be removed: If the elect could have done their own buſineſs, they needed not to have been ſo much in Chriſt's debt, nor to have given him thanks for his undertaking. But this is brought in to hold forth the condeſcendency of his love, that when no other thing could do it, he interpoſed as Surety. The abominableneſs of ſin was ſo great, that the majeſty of God, his infinite holineſs and his ſpotleſs juſtice being wronged, and the finite creature not being able to make amends for the wrong done, did require this: For all mankind, yea all the holy angels could not ſatisfy for the wrong done by one man to the infinite God; therefore he ſays, *I am the Saviour, and there is none elſe:* He gives defiance to all ſaviours beſides himſelf, *None can redeem his brother's ſoul from death, nor give a price ſufficient for it, the redemption of it ceaſeth for ever* among the creatures.

Uſe. Study then to be ſuitably ſenſible of this. Ye may poſſibly think it to be but a common doctrine, but alas, ye walk not under the due and deep conviction and ſenſe of it: Hence it comes to paſs that ſo few

few think themſelves debtors to Chriſt, and that ſo few make their addreſs to him. Aſk the moſt part how they think they ſhall get to heaven? They will readily name many things and ways ere they will rely upon Chriſt and believe in him: If they have done a fault, they ſay they will make amends, or they will pray for pardon; and they think that will do the buſineſs. Such have this language in effect, that either there is no need of ſatisfaction for ſin, or that they can ſatisfy for themſelves.

6. It is implied here, that though the elect have ſinned, and cannot ſatisfy for themſelves, yet it is neceſſary that a ſatisfaction be provided for them. I do not ſay ſimply that whoever hath ſinned muſt have a ſatisfaction made for them; for the Lord hath left legions of angels, and many thouſands of reprobate men and women without hope of a Saviour, or of a ſatisfaction; but conſidering God's purpoſe to bring many ſons to glory, and his decree of election which muſt needs ſtand, and that the elects names are written in the book of life; it is impoſſible that they can continue under the curſe, but muſt be ſatisfied for, and redeemed from it. *For the tranſgreſſion of my people was he ſtricken:* My people have ſinned, and muſt be redeemed; on ſuppoſition of the decree of election our Lord undertook that great work, the elect cannot periſh, ſin cannot draw them utterly away from God; not only ſhall not externals, ſuch as devils or men, perſecution, tribulation, *&c.* interpoſe betwixt them and life, but not even ſin itſelf that is within them; his decree being peremptory muſt ſtand, as he ſays, John x. *I have other ſheep which are not of this fold, them alſo I muſt bring in:* God's purpoſe cannot be fruſtrated or altered, therefore of neceſſity their ſins muſt be ſatisfied for.

7. It is implied here, that for this end, to wit, that the elect might be ſaved from ſin, and that God's decree of election might ſtand ſure, Chriſt Jeſus became

Surety, and did undertake to satisfy for their sins, otherways he could not have been liable to be stricken for them. That he was for the transgression of God's people stricken, is as much as to say that he was engaged for them; as it is, Heb. vii. 22. *He was made Surety of a better testament:* And Psal. xl. 7. *Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.* These things being spoken after the manner of men, and borrowed from, the bargains or transactions that use to be amongst them, we may conceive the business thus, (hinted before) there is the Father's refusing of somewhat, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire*, and his proposing of somewhat else, and that is, that the Mediator would engage for the elect: And upon the other side, there is the Mediator's offer to undertake, and his actual undertaking and accepting of the Father's proposal, when sacrifices and offerings, when thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oyl will not do it; *Lo, I come*, saith he: And then for a conclusion of the engagement and transaction, there is the Father's accepting of his undertaking, he is content to take his sufferings as the price for the elects debt; hence John xvii. he saith, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me;* that is, thine they were by election, and thou gavest them me to be redeemed by me: And Heb. x. 10. it is said, that *it is by this will that we are sanctified;* that is, by the will of the Father, that the Son should be Surety.

Use. Look upon the work of redemption as a great, gracious, and glorious work; about the designing and contriving whereof, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were employed, to speak with reverence before the world was. He might have made worlds of angels, and of sinless men and women at a word, and yet he hath graciously condescended to this way for redeeming of the poor elect. We are, alas, sinfully disposed to think little of the salvation and redemption of

of a ſoul; but it is a great matter in God's account, the deepeſt of whoſe conſultation (if we may ſo ſpeak) is taken up about it, and in the contrivance whereof the manifold wiſdom of God conſpicuouſly ſhineth forth; and as in other things therein, ſo in this, that there was an ancient undertaking and engaging by Jeſus Chriſt in the room of the elect as their Surety.

8. While it is ſaid, *For the tranſgreſſion of my people was he cut off and ſtricken*, it implies that Chriſt in his undertaking for the elect did oblige himſelf to undergo all thoſe ſufferings that were due to them, and even the ſufferings of a curſed death, which was the curſe threatned againſt man for ſin; *the day thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And though Chriſt becoming Surety, the party is altered, yet the price is ſtill continued to be the ſame, as is clear, Gal. iii. 11. *He was made a curſe for us, that the bleſſing of Abraham might come on us Gentiles:* Whereby the juſtice of God is vindicated, and he hath acceſs to ſhew mercy to the elect without any the leaſt imputation to it; nay, this way is more for the vindication of God's juſtice, and for the making of his faithfulneſs to ſhine, that Chriſt became man, and died for the elect, than if the curſe had fallen and lain on all the elect themſelves; and it is a greater reſtraint on ſinners to hate ſin: I ſay again, that thereby the pure and ſpotleſs juſtice of God is vindicated, and his faithfulneſs more demonſtrated, when he will needs ſo ſeverely, and with ſo much holy rigidneſs exact of the Surety the elects debt to the leaſt farthing, than if they had ſuffered themſelves eternally. It ſhews forth alſo both the manifold wiſdom and riches of the free grace of God: there being a decree of election for ſaving of many, and for bringing them to glory; and they being under ſin, there is another decree and threatning that goes forth for curſing the ſinner: and theſe two ſeeming to be altogether irreconcilable, the queſtion comes in on the one hand, how is it poſſible that a ſinner under the curſe

curse can be saved? and upon the other hand, how is it possible than an elect of God can be damned? The wisdom of God looseth the knot; spotless justice is satisfied by taking hold of, and falling on the Surety: wonderful grace and love vent themselves in pardoning the sinner, and accepting of a ransom for him; and manifold wisdom manifests itself in knitting these two together, so as none of them can witness its effect; but all turns to the manifestation of the glory of grace at length; it cannot be that the elect shall be damned, yet here stands the threatning of a just God, and his curse ready to be executed, but here is the reconcilation; the curse is executed on the Mediator, whereby God shews himself to be a hater of sin, and an avenger of the wrong done to his justice; and the elect sinner is pardoned, whereby God manifesteth the freedom of his grace, and his wonderful condescending love.

But now we come to a *6th* doctrine, which is more directly held forth in the words, and it hath two branches, that our Lord Jesus his death and sufferings is a proportionable price and satisfaction laid down for the sins of the elect, and for them only. This is in the expres words of the prophet: If the question be asked, wherefore suffered Christ all this? He answers, he suffered it as a price for transgression: If it be asked again for whom, or for whose transgression did he suffer? He answers, not for all men and women in the world, but, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*, or the stroke was on him for their transgressions. The first branch of the doctrine is to this purpose, that Christ's suffering is intended to satisfy for the transgression of God's elected people, and with respect to satisfying, for their sins did he suffer. And if we take these to be truths that we marked before, as implied in the words, this will natively and necessarily follow: If he engaged to be Surety for the elects debt, then his laying down his life, must be,

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on the ſame account, and for the ſame end. Now, when we ſpeak of Chriſt's laying down a price to ſatisfy for the tranſgreſſions of the elect, we mean not only this, that his ſufferings and death have a value in themſelves to ſatisfy for their ſins; but that they are ſo intended by him in undergoing of them, and that they are ſo accepted of God according to his purpoſe, and according to the tranſaction that paſt betwixt Jehovah and the Mediator. They are not only (as Socinians ſay) to be a confirmation of the doctrine which he preached, and to be a rule and example to us of patient ſuffering, and of giving obedience to the death, as he did; but its alſo and mainly to ſatisfy the juſtice of God for our debt. So then this wicked tenet of the Socinians is exceeding derogatory to the ſufferings of Chriſt, and to the matchleſs love that ſhined in them, yea, even to the whole deſign of redemption; for if Chriſt's ſufferings be not a ſatisfaction to juſtice, we are left without all juſt plea and apology for ourſelves at God's bar; and if we have none, then that curſe looks the wakened ſinner full in the face, *The day thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die:* And whoever men in their ſecurity may pleaſe themſelves with ſuch dreams, and think that a ſatisfaction to juſtice is not needful; yet if the conſcience be once wakened, it will not be quieted without one; and if mens faith give not credit to God's threatnings, they can have but little, or rather no comfort at all in his promiſes. There is therefore a neceſſity of a ſatisfaction; and if Chriſt's ſufferings be not the ſatisfaction, there is not another, and ſo the whole work of redemption is overturned. So then, though Chriſt in his ſufferings hath left us a copy how we ſhould ſuffer, yet that is not the only nor the principal end of them; but it is contrived in the covenant of redemption, and intended by the Mediator, and withal accepted by Jehovah, that they ſhould be the meritorious cauſe of pardon to the elect, and the price of their redemption.

This may be further cleared and confirmed, 1. From the phrase that is ordinarily made use of in scripture, *He suffered for the sins* of his people: And in the text, *for the transgressions of my people was he stricken:* Their sins had a peculiar influence in bringing the stroke on him; and what influence I pray could they have but as they procured the stroke to him? And if his strokes were procured by our sins, then the desert of them was laid on him, and his sufferings behoved to be the curse that we elect sinners should have suffered; so when he is called their Surety, it tells us that he undertook their debt, and his laying down of his life is the performance and fulfilling of his undertaking as Surety. And considering that their debt was exacted of him, and that he was arraigned before God's tribunal as their Surety in their room; and that this could be for nothing else but to answer for them as being their bondsman; his sufferings must be intended as a satisfaction for their sins; for the elects sins were not the cause why Pilate, the people of the Jews, and the scribes and Pharisees pursued him to death; but for our sins he was arraigned before God's tribunal, and being our Surety he was called to reckon for them, and they were put upon his account. 2. It is clear also from the names that his sufferings have in the scripture, where they are called the *price of our redemption, a buying of* us, a *propitiation* for our sins that pacified God, Rom. iii. 25. and 1 John ii. 2. A *sacrifice* often, and *ransom*, Matt. xx. 28. *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many*, that is, for all his elect people, to relieve them from the bondage they were under, which plainly shews the respect that his sufferings had to our sins, that they were a propitiation for them to God. 3. It is clear, if we consider that Christ's death as to its object is for the transgressions of all God's people, of all the elect that lived before he suffered, whether they died in their infancy

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or at age, and for all that lived or shall live and die after his suffering, to the end of the world. Now, what benefit could redound to them that died ere Christ came in the flesh by his sufferings, if it were as Socinians say? For his death could not sure be a pattern of patience and obedience to them; but the efficacy of his death was from the beginning of the world: He was still in that sense the Lamb slain before his incarnation, as well as since. And if it be not meritorious in procuring salvation to elect infants, what influence or advantage can it have as to them? Either they are not taken to heaven at all, or they are taken to heaven, and yet not in the least obliged to Christ for their being brought thither; or if they be obliged to him, it is certainly by virtue of the merit of his sufferings for expiating the sins of his people. 4. It is clear from this, that in this same chapter, and throughout the gospel, all the benefits that come to God's people, as namely justification and pardon of sin, they are attributed to this as the cause of them; as verse 11. *By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many:* And if all the spiritual benefits that come to us were procured by his death, there must necessarily be virtue in it that procured them; and it must be a price and satisfaction in reference to the procuring and purchasing thereof, that he laid down in his dying. 5. It is clear from the end that God had before him in the work of redemption, and in Christ's sufferings; which was to glorify his justice as well as his mercy, and that neither of them might be clouded, or reflected upon. Now, by Christ's death, God's justice is glorified, and he is seen to be just in executing his threatning against sin, even in the person of his own dearly beloved Son, when he became Surety for sinners; but if his sufferings had not a satisfaction in them to divine justice, though there might be some shew of shewing mercy, yet none at all of a satisfaction to justice; but faith

the apoſtle, Rom. iii. 25, 26. ‘ God hath ſet him ‘ forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, ‘ to declare his righteouſneſs, and that he might be ‘ juſt, and the juſtifier of them which believe in Je‘ ſus.’ By this, God hath made it manifeſt, that he is a juſt God, that none may prepoſterouſly preſume upon mercy, nor dare to be familiar with ſin, when it is purſued in the Surety with ſuch ſeverity.

For uſe and application, 1. Do not think theſe truths to be of little concernment to you, as alas they, and ſuch like truths of the goſpel are often thought of by many, and therefore they are taſteleſs to them, and it is a wearineſs to people to hear them ſpoken of. And yet notwithſtanding, this ſame truth that we are now upon, is a great ground of our faith; for if we believe not this, that Chriſt was a propitiation for ſin, we can have no ground of truſting to him, or believing on him; but knowing and being confirmed in the faith of this truth, we have good ground from it to lay hold of Chriſt, to expect God's favour, and to be freed from the curſe; becauſe Chriſt is our Surety, who undertook, and accordingly ſatisfied for us, which is the thing that makes his death to be ſweet. That Chriſt in his death ſhould demean himſelf to leave us an example, is much, yet if we had no more by it, it would be but cold comfort, except we had it as a ſatisfaction to divine juſtice to reſt upon. Tho' this may be looked upon as doctrinal only, yet it comes nearer to our practice than we are aware of; and though we have no Socinians in opinion and profeſſion to deal with, yet we have two ſorts that are Socinians in heart amongſt us. 1. Thoſe that go on ſecurely in ſin, and yet hope to get mercy, and who will confeſs they are ſinners, but that for making an amends, they will pray and mend their life, and they will ſpeak of a number of things, but it may be, not one word of Chriſt or of his purchaſe, or of their natural inclination to preſume, and deſpiſing Chriſt, as if

if they had nothing yet to look to but a covenant of works without a Saviour, as if God had removed, or would remove the curſe threatened without a ſatisfaction, ſo that Chriſt's ſatisfaction is not known nor reſted on by a multitude of hypocrites that live in the viſible church. And this is eaſily proved from this, that there are but very few who make uſe of him, or ſtand in awe of ſin. If it were believed, that juſtice required, and would have ſatisfaction either of the ſinner himſelf, or of a Surety in his room, and that Chriſt is the only Surety, people would either quit their hopes of heaven, or be more ready to acknowledge their obligations to Chriſt; and that ſo many maintain the hope of heaven without a due conſideration of a ſatisfaction to juſtice by Chriſt, and without employing of him, it declares plainly, that they are drunken with this error. A ſecond ſort are thoſe, who being wakened in conſcience, and ſenſible of ſin, yet are as mournful, heſitating, and hopeleſs to have peace through him, as if he had not ſatisfied; what elſe does the doubting and deſpondency of ſuch ſay, but that there is not a complete ſatisfaction in Chriſt's death? and that therefore they dare not truſt to it, otherwiſe they would wonder that God hath provided ſuch a remedy, and adventure to reſt upon it, ſeeing God is as well pleaſed with it as if they had not provoked him at all, or had ſatisfied his juſtice themſelves.

2*dly*, It ſerves to let us ſee what we are in God's debt, and how much we are obliged to the Mediator, when there was a neceſſity, that either he ſhould ſuffer, or that we ſhould periſh; and that though his ſufferings drew ſo deep as to bring him *to priſon and to judgment*, and to put him to a holy ſinleſs anxiety and perplexity, that yet he yielded to it, and underwent all for our ſakes. This is our great ground of confidence, and the ſtrong ſtay of the mind of a wakened believer; and ſhould make us wonder at the

Father's love that gave the Son, and at the Son's love that was so condescending, and should make our souls warm towards him, who, when we deserved nothing but to be hurried away to the pit, was content to enter himself as our Surety, and to pay our debt. It should also be a motive to chase souls into him, knowing that where sin is, there a satisfaction must be, and that there is therefore a necessity to fly to him, and to be in him, because there is no other way to get justice satisfied; the thorough conviction whereof is that which, through grace, not not only chaseth the soul to, but engageth it to close with Christ, and to rest upon him, and to give him the honour of its preservation, when it is ready otherwise to sink. Now the Lord himself teach you to make this use of this doctrine!

SERMON XXXIII.

ISAIAH LIII. *Verse* 8.

Verse 8. *He was taken from prison, and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

THERE is nothing that concerns us more than to be well acquainted with the doctrine of Christ Jesus, and his sufferings; the prophet hath therefore been shewing much what Christ suffered in the former words, and hath largely described his humiliation to

to judgment and death, *For*, saith he, *he was cut off out of the land of the living:* In the words read he answers two important questions concerning his sufferings, 1. To what end were all these sufferings? he answers, That they were for transgressions, even to be a satisfaction to justice for them. The 2*d* question is, For whose sins were the sufferings of Christ to be a satisfaction? it is answered expressly in these words, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken*, or the stroke was upon him; it was for the sins of the elect, and of the elect only. For this is the prophet's scope, who having spoken of Christ's sufferings and death, holds forth the meritorious and procuring cause and end thereof; and this is the result, design, and sum of all, even to be a satisfaction for God's elect people; for, as we shewed, by God's people are not meant all men in the world, nor the Jews only, for Christ hath many sheep beside them; but it is God's peculiar people, in opposition to the multitude, who are not his people.

The doctrine, or rather the branch of the doctrine we left off at, was this (and it is exclusive) that Christ's death is only intended to be a price for the sins of God's elect people, and was laid down with respect to them; his death and sufferings are to be looked upon, and considered only as a price and satisfaction for their sins, and for the sins of none other; or thus, Jesus Christ, in his suffering, and in the laying down of his life, had a respect to the elect, and intended the removing of the sins and transgressions of God's elect people only, and of none other. We know nothing that we can make of these words, nor of the prophet's scope in them, but this; who, as he hath been describing Christ's sufferings in all other respects, so he doth in this; to wit, in respect of the persons for whom he suffered, and of the meritorious cause, and end of his sufferings; for says the text, *for the transgressions of my people*, that is of God's elect people *was he stricken*.

This branch of the doctrine is of great moment in the whole ſtrain of grace, for if this land mark be removed, grace becomes common, and as ſome call it *univerſal*, and ſo in effect no grace at all; for grace hath a peculiar channel of its own, wherein it runs towards a certain ſelect number, and not towards all; I do not mean of grace taken in a large ſenſe, for ſo all men, as they are partakers of any mercy, or of common favours, may be ſaid to have grace extended to them; but I mean God's ſpecial grace, favour and good will, which is extended only to the elect, for whoſe ſins Chriſt ſuffered; the right bounding of which doctrine ſhews forth both God's ſovereignty in the diſpenſing of grace, and the freeneſs thereof in communicating, and manifeſting of it to whom he will, and which thus conſidered, is eſpecially engaging of the hearts of them on whom he pleaſeth to manifeſt it.

Ere I come to confirm this branch of the doctrine, take a word or two of advertiſement in the entry, 1. That Chriſt's death may be conſidered two ways, 1. In reſpect of itſelf, and as abſtracted from the covenant, of redemption, wherein it is contrived as to all the circumſtances of it; in which ſenſe as his death and ſufferings are of infinite value and worth, ſo they are (as divines uſe to ſpeak) of value to redeem the whole world, if God in his deſign and decree had ſo ordered, and thought meet to extend it. 2. We are to conſider his ſufferings and death as a price agreed upon in the covenant, or bargain of redemption, wherein theſe two or three things concur. 1. God's propoſal. 2. Chriſt's acceptation, and deſign in laying down his life. 3. The Father's acquieſcing therein, and declaring himſelf well pleaſed therewith; we ſpeak not here of Chriſt's death in the firſt reſpect, that is as abſtract from the covenant; for in that reſpect he might have laid down his life for few or more, for ſome or for all, if it had been ſo intended; but we

we speak of it in the second respect, as it is a price agreed upon in God's purpose, and Christ's design, and in God's acceptation; and thus we say, that his death is only intended as a satisfaction and recompence for the sins of the elect, and was laid down for them only.

2dly, We may consider Christ's sufferings and death, in the fruits of it either as they respect common favours and mercies, common gifts, and means of grace, which are not peculiar and saving, but common to believers with others, being bestowed upon all professors in the visible church; or as they are peculiar and saving, such as faith, justification, adoption, &c. Now, when we say, that Christ's sufferings and death, are a price for the sins of his people, we exclude not the reprobate, simply from temporal and common favours and mercies that come by his death, they may have, and actually have common gifts and works of the spirit, the means of grace, which are some way effects and fruits of the same covenant; but we say, that the reprobate partake not of saving mercy, and that Christ's death is a satisfaction only for the elect, and that none other get pardon of sin, faith, and repentance, &c. by it, but they only, it was intended for none other, and this we clear and confirm from, and by these following grounds and arguments, which we shall shortly hint at.

The first argument is drawn from this same assertion of the prophet, thus, If Christ's death be only a satisfaction for the sins of God's people, then it is not a satisfaction for the sins of all; but it is a satisfaction only for the sins of God's people, therefore not for all; for his people are not all men, or all men are not his people, but his people are a peculiar people separate from others, in God's purpose and decree, as we cleared before, from John xvii. *Thine they were and thou gavest them me*; and the text says expressly, *for the transgressions of my people was he stricken*; he respected

respected the sins of God's people, in accepting of the engagement, and in laying down his life, and for their sins only God accepted him; yea, the very mentioning of them thus here secludes all others; and we must expound them exclusively, as taking in none other, and must look upon the things spoken of them, as agreeing to no other; even as it is said, Heb. iv. *There remains therefore a rest to the people of God*, which is certainly exclusive of all others; and hence, when our Lord speaks of them, John xvii. he opposes them to, and contra-distinguisheth them from all others; *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them that thou hast given me out of the world*; to let us know that the things prayed for to the one, are denied to the other, according to the design of the covenant.

A second ground is drawn from the intentment of the covenant of redemption, where we find two things clear. 1. That as to the end and conveyance of it, the elect are the only persons for whose good it is intended; and if it be the elect for whom he entered into that covenant, then the advantage, good and benefit of the elect must be eyed in this main article of the covenant which relates to Christ's death and sufferings. For, 1. In the covenant of redemption, the good of the elect is proposed and designed by the Father, as is clear, John vi. 39, 40. *This is the Father's will that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; and this is the Father's will that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him may have everlasting life;* which will be the more clear, if we consider the time when this is spoken; it is at such a time when many will not come to him, as verse 36, 37. *Ye also have seen me, and believe not; all that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh, I will in no wise cast out; for I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me;* and then follows,

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This is the will of him that sent me, &c. and verse 43, 44. *Murmur not* (saith he) *among yourselves, no man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him:* This ye heard from John xvii. 2. at greater length. 2. Look on the Son's part of the covenant, and it will also be clear; for his undertaking must be according to the Father's proposing; if the Father did not propose all, but some only to be redeemed, then his undertaking must be for these some, and not for all, agreeable to the Father's proposal, Psal. xl. *Then, said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God:* Now, the Father's will is, that he should undertake for those given him; and it is not his will, that he should undertake for others, therefore he did not undertake for them. 3. Christ's sufferings and death are the executions of the Father's will, and therefore must be the execution of his undertaking, according to his engagement for the elect and given ones; therefore these two are put together, John xvii. 9. and 19. *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, and for their sakes I sanctify myself*, that is, for their sakes whom thou hast given me, and not for the world; he sanctifies himself for them for whom he prays, for them that are given him, and no more.

2*dly*, This is clear in the covenant, that Christ's death is intended therein, as all other covenanted mercies are; that is to say, to whom faith, effectual calling, and justification, &c. are covenanted for, for these is Christ's death covenanted for, and for none other; for the covenant being mutual, the promise on the Father's part must be of equal extent with the Son's stipulation; but all these are only peculiarly applicable to the elect, as benefits flowing from, and following upon Christ's death, which therefore must be peculiarly intended for them, as being undergone for them. Hence when Christ speaks of faith, and effectual calling, John vi. he says, *All that*

the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and none other will, or can come; so justification, pardon of sin, &c. are bought to the elect, and to none others; and when the smallest of blessings are covenanted, and articled for none other, but for the elect, shall Jesus Christ himself, *that gift of God*, or his death, which is the chief thing articled in the covenant, be covenanted for, or applied to any others but to them?

A third ground is drawn from Christ's executing of his offices; for this part of Christ's executing of his offices must correspond, and be of equal extent with all the other parts of his offices, such as his effectual teaching, interceeding, subduing to himself, &c. which are no larger than the elect, for he executes no part of any of his offices for the behoof and benefit of any but of the elect, he savingly enlightens no others; he subdues none other to the faith of the gospel; he interceeds for none other; his intercession is not for the world; therefore his death must be for none other, all these being commensurable and of equal extent; his intercession being grounded on his sufferings, therefore John xvii. he lays aside the world expressly, as those for whom he will not pray, and looks back to the covenant, as the ground of his undertaking for the elect, given him out of the world, and not for others; and if he will not pray, nor interceed for others, what reason can be given for his dying for others? when he will not do the less, which is to pray for them, it were absurd to think or say, that he will do the greater, which is to lay down his life for them.

A fourth ground is this, Christ's death is one of the peculiar evidences of his dearest love, beyond which there is none greater, and a main proof and fruit thereof, and therefore it is not common to all, but is intended for them only, whom he peculiarly loves and designs to bring safe to glory; which is clear, Eph. v. 26. *Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved*

loved his church, and gave himself for it, &c. Rom. v. 5. *God commends his love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* John xv. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends;* there is a world of reprobates whom Christ never loved with peculiar love, and sure for these he did not die; *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*, saith the Lord, Rom. ix. 13. which the apostle holdeth forth, as a sort of copy of God's dealing in reprobation and election in reference to all mankind; and where the Lord himself hath set bounds betwixt them whom he loves and hates, it is too great liberality, or rather too great presumption for any, under whatever specious pretences, to extend this his peculiar love to those whom he disclaims.

A fifth ground is taken from the effect, thus; All for whom Christ died are justified, and freed from the guilt of their sins in due time, but Christ Jesus hath not purchased and actually procured freedom to all men from their sins, all men are not justified, therefore he laid not down his life for all; for, 1. It cannot be said, that he laid down his life for purchasing and buying of such men and women, and yet that he got not that which he bought; and seeing the event tells plainly, that all are not justified, and brought to heaven, it cannot be that he laid down his life a ransom for all, but it must be for the elect only, that he died. 2. To say, that God exacts double payment of one and the self same debt, that he exacts from men over again that which Christ paid already for them, reflects on the justice and wisdom of God; and to say that those persons that go to hell are as much in his debt as those that go to heaven, is no less absurd; for the apostle says, Rom v. 10. *If while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life:* Where he plainly insinuates, that if a person

be bought by Christ's death, it cannot be that he can perish; for if the price be paid by his death, and so the greater thing be done, much more will the lesser, *we shall be saved by his life*. Now this reasoning could have no force, if Christ died for any that shall perish; yea, verse 11. of this chapter, it is said, *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities;* where it is clear, that as many (and no more) whose iniquities Christ hath taken on him and born, shall be justified; for the one is given as a reason of the other; if otherways there would be no difference of the elect from others, if he could by his death bear their iniquities, whom he never justified.

A *6th* ground is taken from the end of the covenant, which is to put a difference betwixt special grace peculiar to some, and severe justice to others, and particularly and specially in Christ's death, which makes out what we affirm; for if when Christ died, many were actually damned, it cannot be said that he died for these, nor that it was with them, as with believers before his death; for it cannot be said, that the intention of his death, in the covenant, could be beyond what it was at his death, the one being the execution of the other: And sure it could not be intended at his death for the damned; for it would seem a very absurd thing to say, that when Christ was to go and lay down his life, that he was going to suffer for many, that were suffering for their own sins in hell, as many reprobate sinners were before he came in the flesh. Can any imagine a possibility of such a thing? Our Lord was not to be so indifferent in his administration, as to cast it thus away; and can any reasonably think, that at one and the same time, the same punishment shall be exacted from Christ, and from the persons themselves, for whom he suffered? Is it possible that this could be intended in the covenant of redemption; or is there free access to justice to pursue Christ as surety, when the principal debtor

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is actually seized upon? Indeed when the principal is set free, as the elect were before his death, there is access to pursue the surety for their debt; but no such thing can be alleged for others that were already damned: But their being taken hold of by justice, is a proof that he answered not for them, nor paid their debt.

7. We may argue thus, If Christ died for all, then either for all indifferently, and so all were alike obliged to Christ; or for some more absolutely that must be satisfied for, and for others conditionally, on supposition that they should believe; but this last is absurd; for, 1. The scripture makes not two considerations of Christ's death. 2. It were absurd to say, that now it cannot be told, whether Christ died for such an one or not. 3. Either that condition is bought for them, or not; if it be bought, then it must be fulfilled; if it be not bought, then 1. That person cannot be said to be bought, because all needful for his redemption is not bought and paid for. 2. Either that condition can be fulfilled by themselves or not; if it may be by themselves, then is free-will established, and none are absolutely redeemed; if it cannot be fulfilled by themselves, and yet bought by him for them, they are determined for another end, to wit, not to get it, and what wisdom can there be in such redemption as this?

The 1. *use* serves for clearing and confirming of a gospel-truth of the covenant of redemption, and for the refutation of a contrary error. As we have somewhat of many errors practically in our hearts, so have we this amongst the rest, that Christ died for all sinners, which nourishes peoples security, and their groundless hope of admission to heaven: But here we see that our Lord Jesus so laying down his life, intended the satisfaction of divine justice, for none but his elect people; and if so, there are many for whom he never intended the benefit of his death. There

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are *three* particular branches of the error which this doctrine confutes: 1. Their opinion which is more wide, and takes in the sins of all men and women in the world, and giveth them an equal share of Christ's sufferings; as if in his intention in laying down his life, and in God's purpose he had suffered and died for all, for him that goes to hell, as well as for him that goes to heaven: But if Christ stand as surety for the elect only, then sure this opinion cannot hold; for all are not God's elect, and therefore all are not indifferently redeemed: And though it may be that some of you think that this looks liker grace, yet it is not only absurd, as being contrary to truth, but it is absurd also, even with respect to grace; for 1. It makes grace a common thing; a man that is in hell to be as much obliged to Christ, as one that is in heaven; and though it plausibly pretends to give grace a broad and large extent, yet it takes away the power of it; for if grace be thus largely extended, it is not grace that makes the application of grace, but the free-will of the creature; for grace, according to this opinion, leaves men to be saved, or not, as they please, and leaves itself to be overcome by man's will, and therefore these errors divide not, but go together hand in hand: For where grace is made so large, free-will is made to have dominion over it; and thus the stress of grace and of election is laid upon it. 2. It lessened the esteem of God's grace in the minds of people; for thus, they think little of heaven, and suppose that it is an easy matter to come at it; and it breeds in them a fearlessness of hell, and of God's wrath: And if many of you had not drunken in this error practically, ye would not be so confident of it, nor so obstinately maintain your hope of heaven without ground. Hence, alas! it is, that many will say, God is merciful, and Christ died for all sinners, and for me, and so sleep away their time in security. I am persuaded, that much of the security and presumption

tion that abounds among carnal profeſſors is from this ground, that grace is fancied to be thus broad and large. We grant, that as to the conveyance and nature of it, it is broad, but in reſpect of the objects on whom it is beſtowed it is narrow, though it cometh from large bowels. 3. It exceedingly mars, and diminiſheth man's thankfulneſs, for when a mercy is judged to be common, who will be thankful for it, as he would be, if it were ſpecial and peculiar? That which is a great ground of thankfulneſs for election, effectual calling, juſtification, &c. is becauſe theſe mercies are peculiar; even ſo that which makes the redeemed thankful for redemption, is becauſe they are redeemed, and bought when others are left; hence is that ſong of the redeemed company, Rev. v. 9. *Thou art worthy to open the book, for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation:* It heightens not their praiſe that all of every kindred and tongue, and nation were redeemed; but this doth it, that when the Lord had the whole world before him, he was graciouſly pleaſed to purchaſe, and redeem them out of it; that as it is, John xi. 52. *He ſhould gather together in one the children of God, that were ſcattered abroad:* They therefore, I ſay, bleſs him, and wonder when they conſider, that they are pitched on, who are by nature the ſame with thoſe that are paſt by. It were a ſtrange thing to affirm, that they who are in hell have as great ground of praiſe, and of ſaying, *We thank thee, for thou haſt redeemed us by thy blood*, as thoſe that are in heaven have. 4. This making of grace ſo wide and large in its extent as to take in all, doth leave the people of God altogether comfortleſs. But it may be here ſaid, how is it that it is more comfort to believers, that grace is peculiar in ſaving, and that but a few are redeemed, in compariſon of others that are not redeemed, than if we ſhould extend it unto, and account it to be for all?

all? Or how is this more comfortless to them, that grace is made universal? answer, 1. Because, if it were universal, many whom Christ died for, are now in hell, and what consolation can there be from that? A man may be redeemed, and yet perish, and go to hell for all that: But its strong consolation when this comes in, *If when we were enemies, we were reconciled by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.* If he died for us when we were enemies, will he not much more save us being friends? 2. Suppose a person to be in a state of nature, what comfort could he have by looking on redemption, as universal? He could not expect heaven by it; for many expect heaven on that ground who will never get it: But it is a sort of consolation, even to them that are without, to consider that redemption is peculiar to some; for though all get not to heaven, yet they that believe shall have it; and so upon their closing with Christ, the consolation presently flows out unto them; whereas, if they should lay it for a ground that Christ's death were universal, they could never have solid ground of consolation by flying to him. 5. This error doth quite overturn and enervate the whole covenant of redemption and peculiar love. 1. It enervates and obscures the wisdom that shines in it, if Christ may buy and purchase many by his death, who shall yet notwithstanding perish. 2. It enervates and obscures the love and grace that shine in it; for it makes Christ to throw away the love and grace of it on reprobates, and so cast pearls to swine. 3. It obscures the freedom of it, which appears in his taking of one, and refusing another, as it is, Rom. ix. 11, 12. *The children not being yet born, and having done neither good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said, the elder shall serve the younger, (as it is written) Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.* 4. It obscures the justice of it, if he should buy all,

all, and yet have but some; for it being the design of God to inflict on Christ the curse that was due to sinners, and to spare them; if this should be the result of it, that many for whom he died, and took on him the curse, should perish, he would have but some of those whom he bought, and justice would twice exact satisfaction for one and the same debt, once of the Surety, and again of the principal debtor that perisheth; whereas when Christ becomes Surety they are set free for whom he was Surety, and it is justice that it should be so. We do the rather insist on the confutation of this error, because this is a time wherein it is one of the devil's great designs which he drives, to trouble the clear springs of the gospel, and to revive this error among the rest. And there is something of it in those poor foolish creatures, who speak so much of a light within, as if all were alike, and had something, which if they use well, they may get life by. This error always leads men to be masters and carvers of God's decree, and of Christ's purpose and design in the work of redemption, and suspends the benefit of his death mainly, if not only on the consent of man's free-will.

A 2*d* branch of the error which this doctrine refutes, is that which is vented by some, who are not professed enemies, but in other things deserve well of the church of Christ, which therefore should be our grief to mention: And it is this, that though Christ hath not simply purchased redemption from sin to all men, that yet he hath taken away from all the sins of that first covenant of works, as if there were, as they say, no sin for which men are now condemned, but the sin of infidelity, or unbelief. But this is dangerous; for 1. If this be true, that Christ's death is only a price for the sins of the elect, then there are no sins of others reckoned on this score. 2. It divideth Christ's purchase; and never, sure, can we find Christ's death divided, which were to say, that he hath

bought a man in part from wrath, and not wholly; ſuch a dividing of Chriſt, and of his death, ſeems not conſiſtent with the ſtrain of the goſpel; for as there is one ſacrifice, ſo there is one account on which it is offered. 3. It ſeems to infer a good and ſafe condition to all them that die without ſinning againſt the goſpel, and ſo to infants born out of the church, that never ſinned againſt the covenant of grace; and it pleads much for them that never heard the goſpel; yea poſſibly for all, if they be not obliged to believe the goſpel, as it is hard to ſay they are, who never heard of it. 4. There are many in hell this day, who know and feel this to be an untruth, being condemned for ſins againſt the covenant of works; therefore he undertook not their debt, nor payed for them: And when the books ſhall be opened, there will be many other ſins found to be reckoned for, than ſins againſt the goſpel. Are not whoremongers, adulterers, murderers, thieves, *&c.* to reckon for theſe ſins? It is very ſad that ſuch things ſhould take place with men otherways uſeful; but as in other things, ſo in this it is hurtful, which we ſhould not ſpeak of, were it not that they are ſpread abroad in books, wherewith many may be leavened.

A 3*d* branch of the error which this doctrine refutes, is, That Chriſt died conditionally for all hearers of the goſpel, to whom he is conditionally offered; and this is alſo vented by the ſame authors, who ſay, that though he hath not bought all men abſolutely, nor died to procure life abſolutely for them, yet that he did ſo conditionally, and upon ſuppoſition that they ſhould afterward believe on him. But there can be no conditional ſatisfaction intended here; for 1. If reſpect be had only to the ſins of the elect in Chriſt's undertaking, then none is had to the ſins of all. 2. If the Father's acceptation of the price be abſolute, then there is no conditional buying. 3. If it be conditional, then he ſuſpended the effect of his death,

death, the satisfaction for his soul-travel on man's will: And if this condition could not be fulfilled by man, then it is an unwise bargain, and nothing of it may come to be fulfilled, and then believing is no fruit of grace. Again, he hath either bought faith to them as he hath done to the elect, or not: If he hath, then they reject it, and so grace is not efficacious; if not, he hath bought the end without the means leading to it. Or thus, if it be conditional, it is either on a condition that they can fulfil, or on a condition that they cannot fulfil: If it be on a condition which they can fulfil, then it hangs grace on mens free-will, and suspends the decree of election on their receiving of Christ: If it be a condition that is not in their power to fulfil, then either Christ hath bought that condition to them, or not; to say that he hath not bought the condition of faith, will infer a strange assertion that he hath bought life, and not the condition, the end, and not the means: And if it be said that he hath bought it, it cannot be said that he hath done it absolutely, because they never get it, or if absolutely, then to the elect only in whom it must be, and is in due time fulfilled: And so in effect it resolves in this, that Christ's purpose is to be bounded and confined to the elect only.

There are some difficulties and objections that will readily be here moved, which we will not enter upon, only for preventing of mistakes: It stands in the way of some to hinder their believing as they suppose, that Christ hath died for some, and not for all, and they know not if they be of that small number; if we were to speak to such, we would say, 1. God hath not elected all, and so who knows if he hath elected them? And he will not save all, and who knows if he will save them? And so the doubt will stick still; if people will thus break in upon God's secret will and purpose, which belongs not to them. 2. Christ's dying for you is not the formal ground nor warrant

of your faith, nor yet of the offer of the gospel, but the Lord's own will encouraging you to believe, and calling for it from you, and his commanding you to rest upon Christ for the attaining of righteousness, as he is offered to us in the gospel. We are invited by his command and promise, for we are not first called to believe that Christ died for us, but we are called first to believe in him that is offered to us in the gospel, that is our duty: People are not condemned, because Christ died not for them, but because when he offered the benefit of his death and sufferings to them, they slighted and rejected it: We are to look first to what Christ calleth us to, and not to meddle with the other, to wit, whom Christ minded in his death, till we have done the first. The word bids all believe, that they may be saved; and such as neglect this command will be found disobedient. 3. Though Christ hath not died for all, yet all that flee unto him by faith, shall be partakers of his death, and from this ye should reason, and not from his intention in dying. If ye come not to him ye cannot have ground to think that he died for you, but if ye go to him by faith, ye may expect that he will pray for you, and own you for believers. Christ puts in that word, John xvii. *They have believed thy word*, as well as that other, *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me:* And if we put these two together, the one will be found as sure a ground of consolation as the other. But it were but a poor comfort to say, that Christ died for all; and yet that they may all, or most, or many of them perish for all that.

The *2d use* serves to stir them up to thankfulness for whom Christ hath satisfied, and who are fled for refuge to him. If there be any here to whom Christ hath manifested such love, that they can say he hath loved me, and given himself for me; O! How are ye obliged to wonder, and bless him? Greater love than this cannot be; and it should warm your hearts with love

love to him the more, when ye reflect on God's deſign upon you in particular in the covenant of redemption.

Uſe 3*d*, If Chriſt intended his death and ſufferings only for the elect, then few come to heaven; ſo all believers ſhould be the more diligent. Becauſe Chriſt died not for all, every one ſhould aim in God's own way, to have it made ſure to himſelf that Chriſt died for him, and ſhould engage him to be the more watchful and diligent, to make his calling and election ſure, becauſe as its not all that are elected, ſo its not all that are purchaſed by Chriſt's death. Redemption is ſure in itſelf, and free grace appears conſpicuouſly in it; yet wiſdom and ſovereignty do alſo appear in this, that it is not of all; therefore ſtudy ye to make it ſure by fleeing to Chriſt by faith, and by the ſtudy of holineſs and mortification in his ſtrength, and through the power of his death, which will be a proof of your intereſt in it. This were much more ſuitable than to be quarrelling with God's decrees, as ſome are brought in Rom. ix. 19. *Why doth he find fault? Who hath reſiſted his will?* To whom the apoſtle anſwers, *Who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* It becomes you not to diſpute with God, but to ſeek with more ſollicitude, and with holy and humble carefulneſs, to make the matter ſure to yourſelves. We may eaſily raiſe ſtorms by our diſputes, but ſhall come to no peace by them; this only can be come at by flying to the hope ſet before us.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.